

# Vision and Language

## LXMLS 2024



Desmond Elliott  
Department of Computer Science  
University of Copenhagen



# Working Definition

---

Multimodal models jointly processes information from two or more input modalities, e.g. images and text, speech and video, etc.

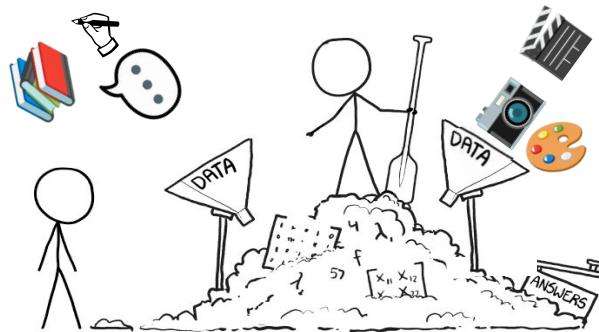
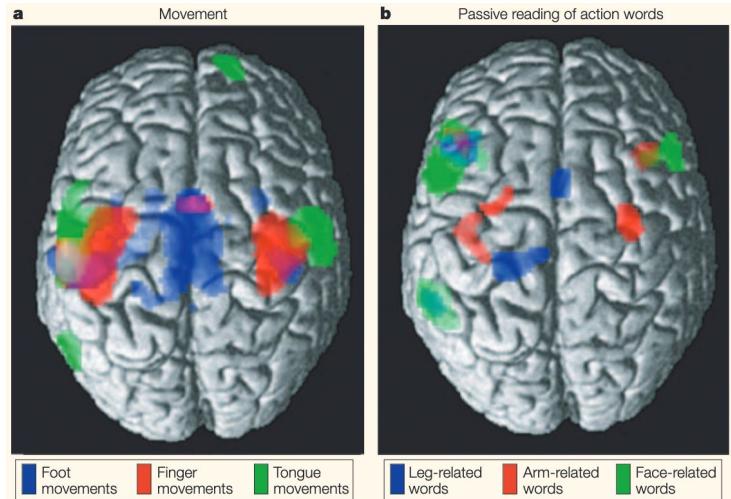


Image adapted from <https://xkcd.com/1838/> (CC BY-NC 2.5)

# Why Multimodality?

---

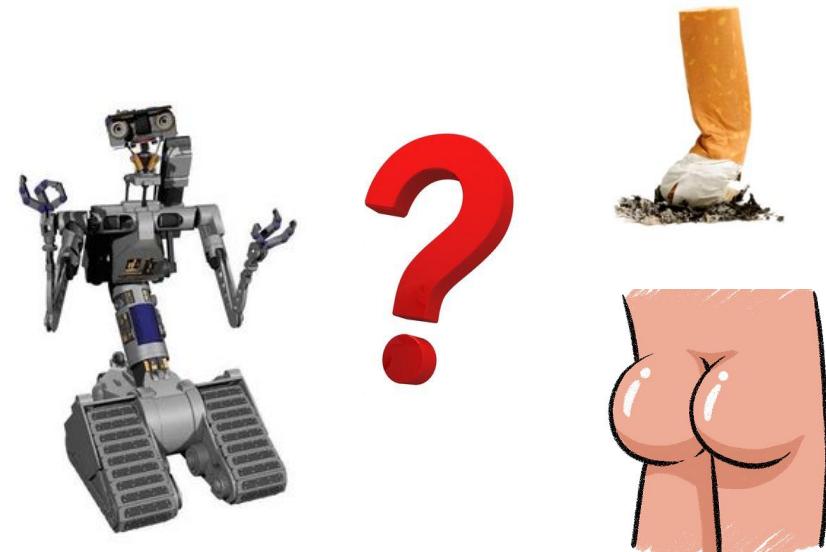
- Humans ground conceptual knowledge in modality processing systems in the brain
- Evidence that grounding activates similar brain regions for different input modalities



Barsalou et al. (2003). Grounding conceptual knowledge in modality-specific systems. *Trends in cognitive sciences*, 7(2):84–91.  
Pulvermüller. (2005). Brain mechanisms linking language and action. *Nature reviews neuroscience*, 6(7), 576-582.

# Multimodality reduces ambiguity

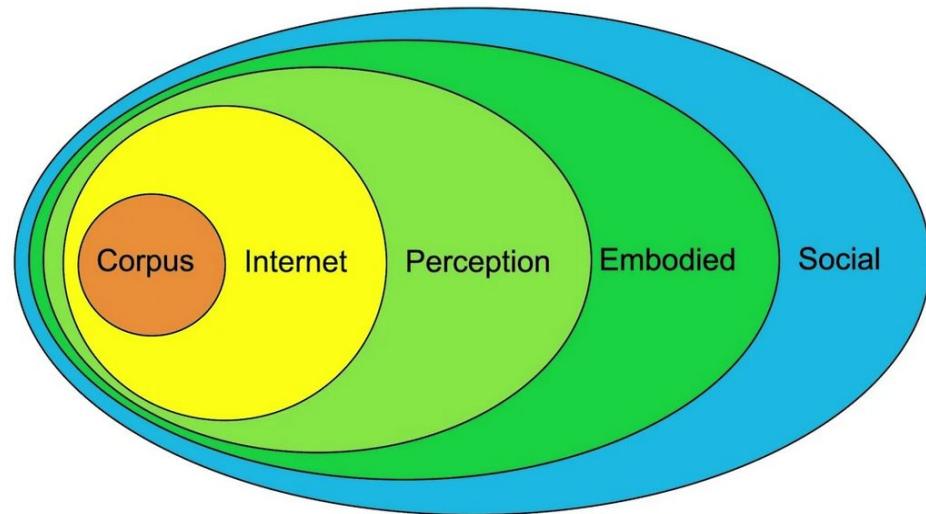
---



# You Cannot Learn Language From

---

- The radio without grounding  
*(lack perception)*
- The television without actions  
*(lack embodiment)*
- Without interacting with others  
*(lack social)*



# (At Least) Five Major Areas

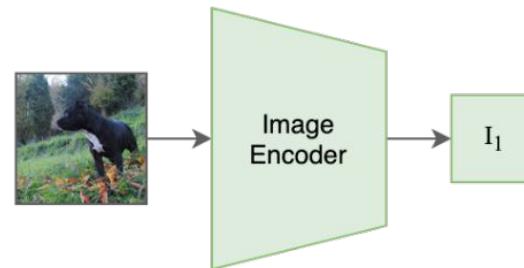
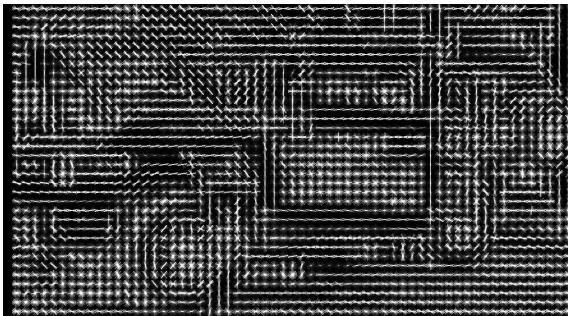
---

- **Representation:** how to convert raw inputs into a usable format
- **Translation:** transform from one modality to another
- **Alignment:** predict relationships between elements across modalities
- **Fusion:** join features from modalities to support prediction
- **Co-learning:** transferring knowledge from one modality to another

# Representation

---

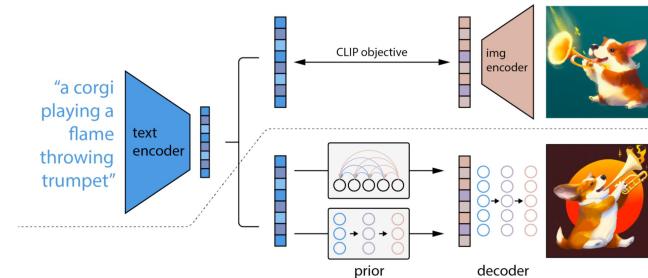
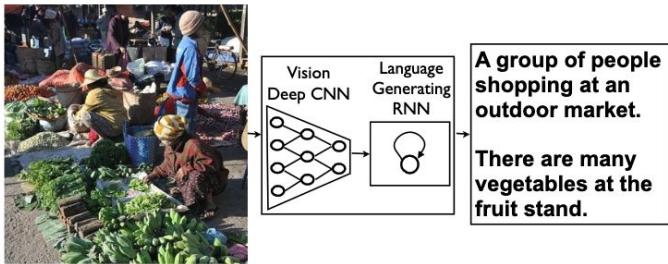
- Great deal of work over the last decade, from HOG features in the early 2000s to CLIP features in the 2020s.



Dalal & Triggs. CVPR 2005. Histograms of oriented gradients for human detection.  
Radford et al. ICML 2021. Learning transferable visual models from natural language supervision.

# Translation

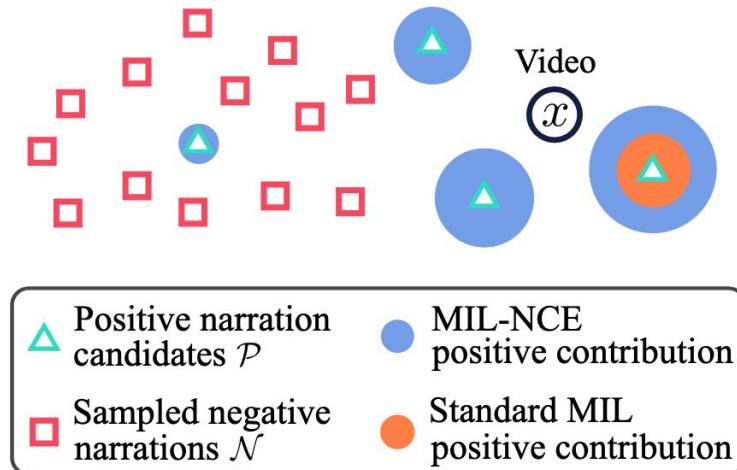
- Explosion of end-to-end neural network models since the mid 2010s



Vinyals et al. (2015). Show and tell: A neural image caption generator. CVPR.  
Ramesh et al. (2022). Hierarchical Text-Conditional Image Generation with CLIP Latents. arXiv.

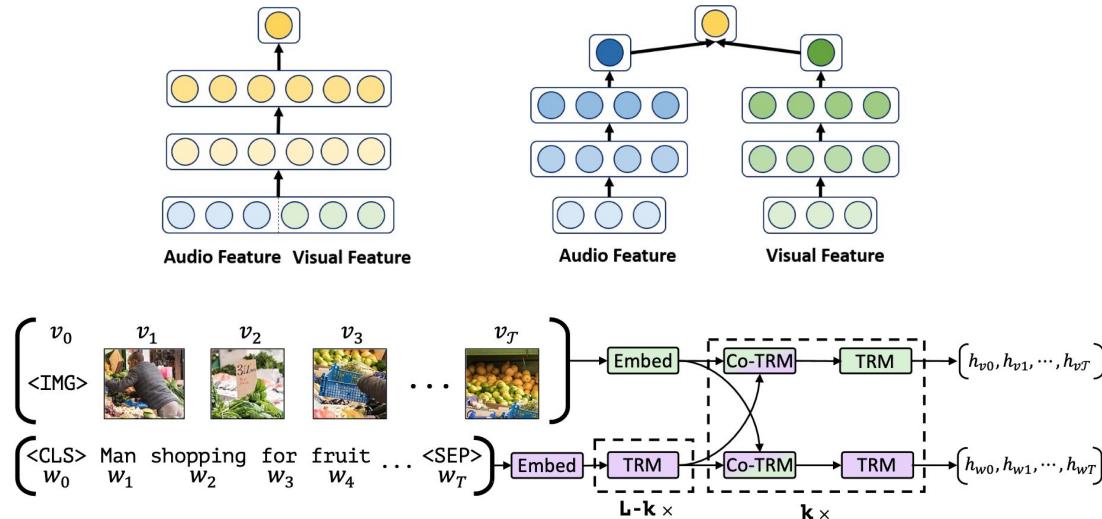
# Alignment

- Important for self-supervised learning and also for phrase grounding



# Fusion

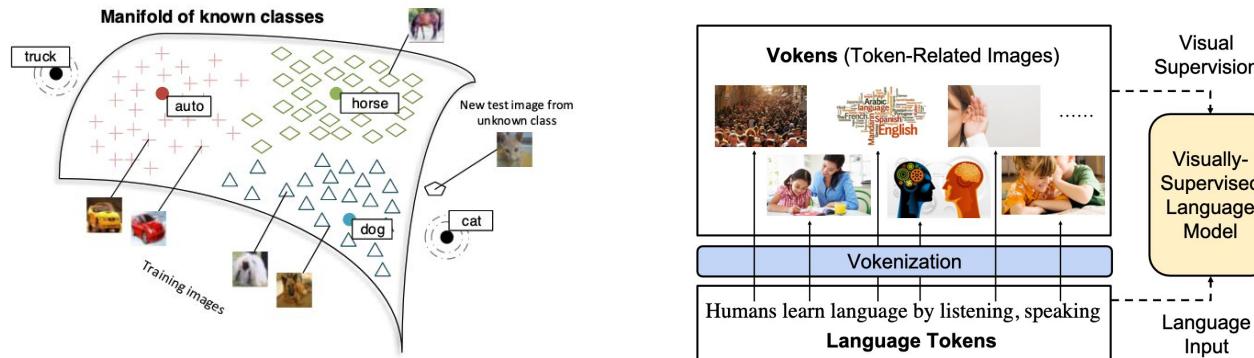
- Early work studied the differences between early and late fusion.
- Multi-head self-attention now provides model-based fusion.



Chen and Jin (2016). Multi-modal conditional attention fusion for dimensional emotion prediction. MM.  
Lu et al. (2019). ViLBERT: Pretraining task-agnostic visiolinguistic representations for vision-and-language tasks. NeurIPS.

# Co-learning

- Zero-shot transfer across modalities, or using visual grounding to improve language models on text-only tasks.



Socher et al. (2013). Zero-shot learning through cross-modal transfer. NeurIPS.  
Tan & Bansal. (2020). Vokenization: Improving Language Understanding with Contextualized, Visual-Grounded Supervision. EMNLP

# Roadmap

---

## Part 1

### 1. Datasets and Tasks for Multimodal Learning

 Visually Grounded Reasoning across Languages and Cultures

### 2. Data Representation

### 3. Modelling Techniques

 Retrieval-Augmentation for Image Captioning, Sequential Multimodal Compositional Generalization

## Part 2

### 4. Understanding Multimodal Models

### 5. Future Directions

 Language Modelling with Pixels

# 1. Datasets and Tasks for Multimodal Learning

# Two Types of Dataset

---

- **General-purpose:** visual data with descriptive annotations

- Conceptual Captions
- LAION-2/5B
- Speech-COCO



Blue Beach  
Umbrellas, Point  
Of Rocks, Crescent  
Beach, Siesta Key -  
Spiral Notebook

- **Task-specific:** visual data with e.g. classification labels

- Image / Video Captioning
- Visual Question Answering
- Visually Grounded Reasoning

What color is the cat's leash?  
purple                      red



# Many Types of Tasks

---

- Sequence generation
    - Image captioning, video captioning  
visual storytelling, image generation
  - Classification
    - VQA, Visually-grounded Reasoning
  - Ranking and Alignment
    - Image↔Text Retrieval  
Referring Expression Localization
- $P(x|v)$
- $P(y|x, v)$
- Distance**( $x, v$ )

# COCO

---

$P(x|v)$

**Distance**( $x, v$ )

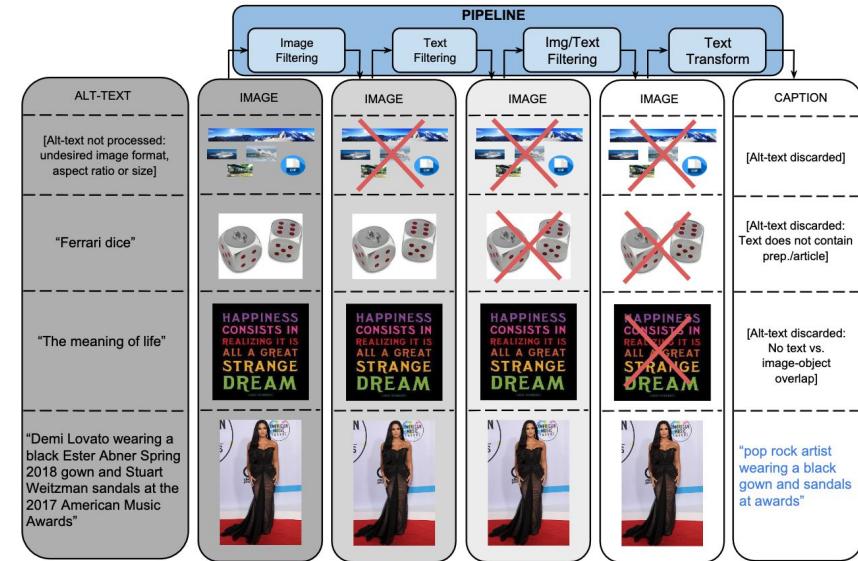
- Used both a **general-purpose** and **task-specific** dataset
- Images covering 80 common objects in context with multiple human-authored captions.
- Object segmentation data too!

some sheep walking in the middle of a road  
a herd of sheep with green markings walking down the road  
a herd of sheep walking down a street next to a lush green grass covered hillside.  
sheared sheep on roadway taken from vehicle, with green hillside in background.  
a flock of freshly sheered sheep in the road.



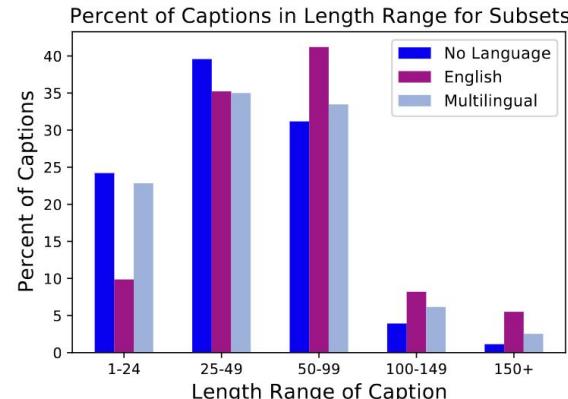
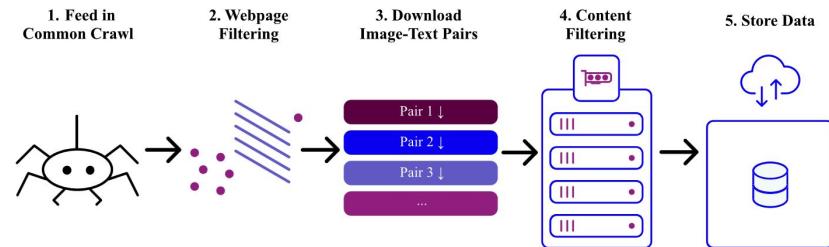
# Conceptual Captions

- Used for pretraining
- 3/12M images released with *normalized* English captions.
- Normalization is not public.
- Due to *linkrot*, much less data is currently available.



# LAION

- Used for pretraining
- Image and multilingual *raw* captions harvested from within Common Crawl
- Data behind Stable Diffusion and OpenCLIP
- 5B variant removed due to illegal material



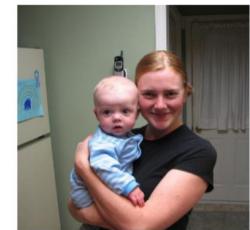
# VQAv2

- Answer questions about images
  - Task with multimodal inputs:
    - Image
    - Question
  - Commonly tackled as classification  
but increasing efforts as NLG
  - 1.1M image–question pairs with  
balanced distribution of answers

Who is wearing glasses?  
man                          woman



Where is the child sitting?  
fridge                          arms



# NLVR2

---

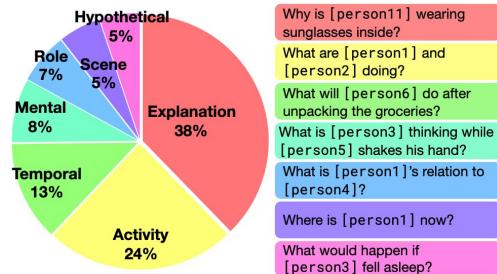
- Binary classification task that requires jointly reasoning over a pair of images and a sentence.
- Human-created hard negatives.
- 107K examples in total.



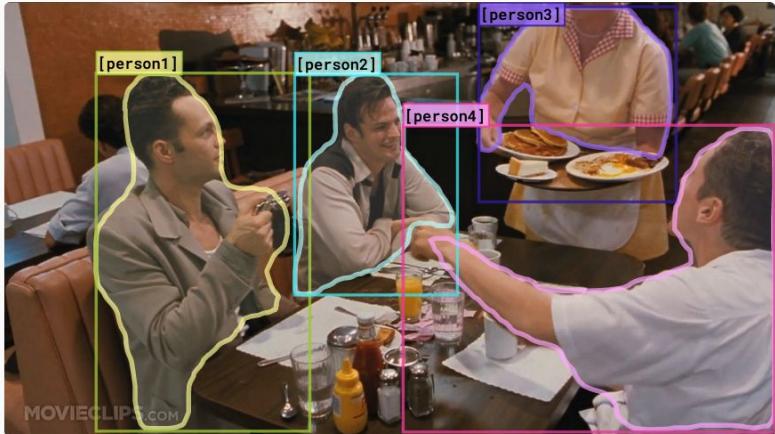
*The left image contains twice the number of dogs as the right image, and at least two dogs in total are standing.*

# Visual Commonsense Reasoning

- 290,000 multiple-choice VQA examples derived from movies.



- In addition to Question Answering, the dataset includes rationale selection too!



Why is [person4] pointing at [person1]?

- a) He is telling [person3] that [person1] ordered the pancakes.
- b) He just told a joke.
- c) He is feeling accusatory towards [person1].
- d) He is giving [person1] directions.

Rationale:

- a) [person1] has the pancakes in front of him.
- b) [person4] is taking everyone's order and asked for clarification.
- c) [person3] is looking at the pancakes both she and [person2] are smiling slightly.
- d) [person3] is delivering food to the table, and she might not know whose order is whose.

# Multi30K

---

- Multilingual aligned image–sentence dataset in many languages
  - English, German, French, Czech, Arabic, Japanese, Turkish, Ukrainian

*A group of people are eating noodles.*

*Eine Gruppe von Leuten isst Nudeln.*

*Un groupe de gens mangent des nouilles.*

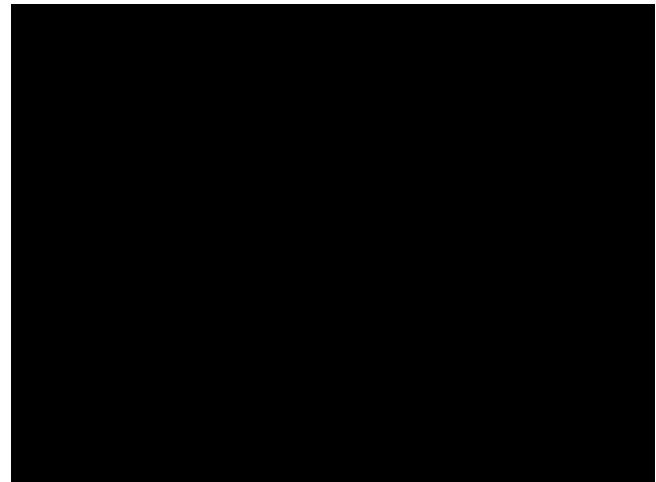
*Skupina lidí jedí nudle.*



# BOBSL

---

- BBC-Oxford British Sign Language Dataset
- Sign spotting and sentence localization tasks
- 1,400 hours of signed shows
  - Factual, entertainment, drama, comedy, children's shows



# Many Many More

---

- Visual Storytelling, e.g. VIST
  - Grounded Referring Expression, e.g. Flickr30K Entities, Visual Genome
  - Visual Entailment, e.g. SNLI-VE
  - Vision & Language Navigation, e.g. RxR
  - Visual Common Sense Reasoning: VCR
  - Text-to-Image Generation, e.g. DALLEval
  - Abstract reasoning, e.g. KiloGram, CRAFT
  - Sign Language Processing, e.g. How2Sign
- 
- *and more and more and more and more*

# Binding: Degree of Multimodality

- The content expressed in textual data depends on the purpose

Social media platforms often form 'echo chambers' that encourage users to only read content that confirms beliefs they already hold (Getty)

Weak

(Crawled)



Strong

(Crowdsourcing)

A woman in a grey suit is giving a speech

Rewriting crawled text improves performance on a variety of downstream multimodal tasks

# Ethical Issues

---

- Multimodal datasets are usually data scraped from the web with *unknown degrees of conformance*, or information about, licensing.



**CC BY:** This license allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, so long as attribution is given to the creator. The license allows for commercial use.

- As of 2022, there are an estimated 2.5B CC-licensed objects online.

# The Problem with Scale

- Scale lets you build systems that perpetuate harmful stereotypes



(Eileen Collins, American astronaut)

$\cos(v, x)$

0.276

"This is a portrait of an astronaut  
with the American flag"

0.308

"This is a photograph of a smiling  
housewife in an orange jumpsuit with  
the American flag"

**Q: How can we collect multimodal data that better reflects the diversity of the world?**

# Visually Grounded Reasoning across Languages and Cultures

EMNLP 2021



F. Liu\*



E. Bugliarello\*



E.M. Ponti



S. Reddy



N. Collier



D. Elliott

# Motivation

---

## Languages

- Mostly in English
- Or some Indo-European Languages



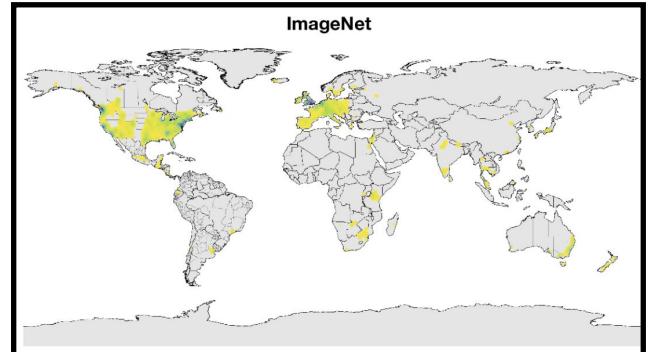
ENG: An **unusual** looking vehicle ...

NLD: Een mobiel **draaiorgel** ...

Example from [van Miltenburg+ 2017](#)

## Image sources

- Mostly from ImageNet or COCO
- Reflecting North American and European cultures



Density map of geographical distribution of images in ImageNet ([DeVries+](#), 2019)

## Implications for V&L models

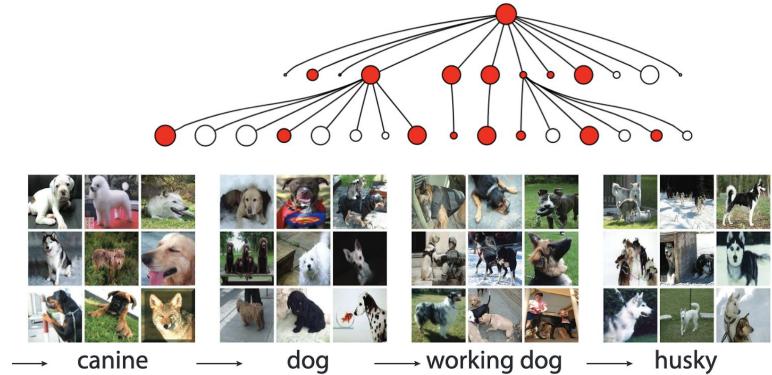
- Narrow linguistic/cultural domain
- No way to assess their real-world comprehension

# Typical Vision and Language



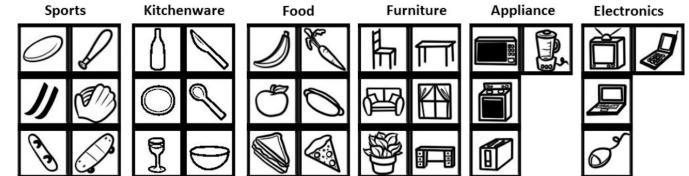
ImageNet (Deng et al. 2009)

- Train visual encoders
- Millions of labelled images
- Derived from the WordNet hierarchy



Common Objects in Context (Lin et al. 2014)

- Train and evaluate multimodal models
- 330K labelled images
  - 80 types of commonly occurring objects



# Concrete Concepts in Cultural Context

---

- Some concepts are most immediately understood within a cultural background

*Culture:* The way of life of a collective of people that distinguishes them from other people (Mora, 2013; Schweder et al. 2007).



Pilota / Jai-alai



Sanxian / Shamisen



Clavie

# Concepts and Hierarchies

---

**Category:** objects with similar properties (Aristotle 40 BCE, ...)

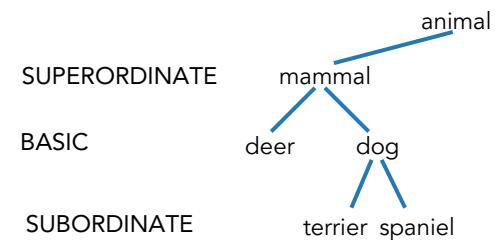
**Concept:** mental representation of a category (Rosch 1973)

Categories form a *hierarchy*

- Basic-level categories (Rosch 1976)

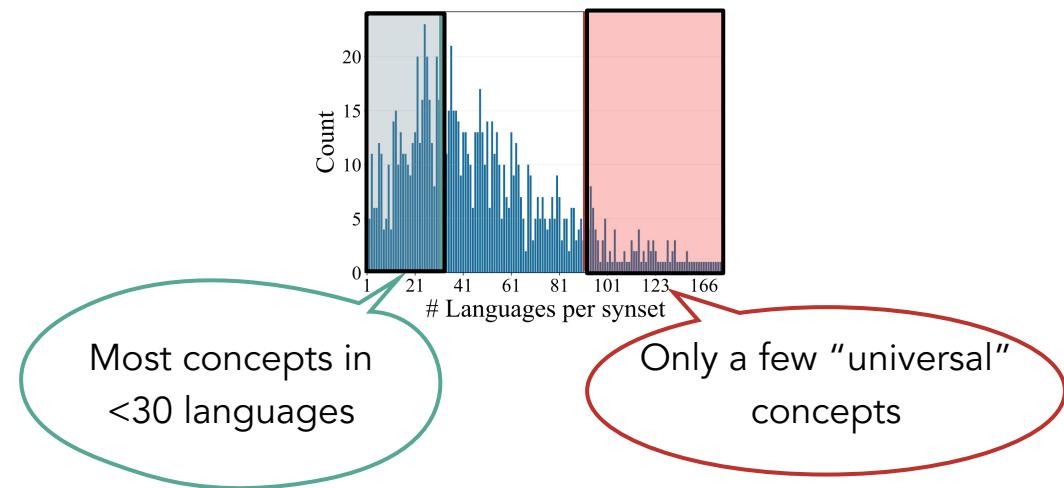
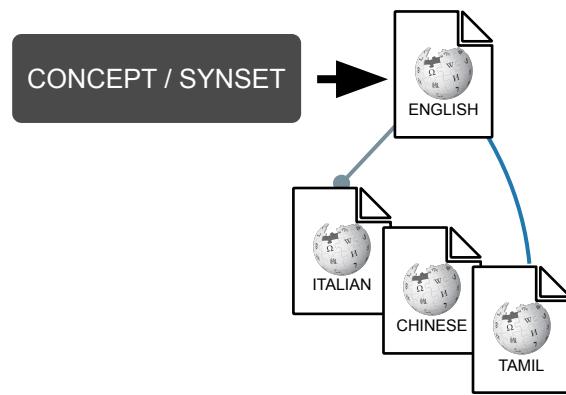
Somewhat universal

- Different cultures (Berlin 2014)
- Familiarity of individuals  
(Wisniewski and Murphy, 1989)



# Are ImageNet Concepts Cross-Lingual?

- ImageNet, COCO and Visual Genome use English WordNet concepts
- Question: estimate cross-linguality using Wikipedia as a proxy





Representative of annotators' cultures



5 typologically diverse languages

Independent, culture-specific annotations



MaRVL-id Bola basket



MaRVL-sw Mpira wa kikapu



MaRVL-tr Basketbol



MaRVL-zh 篮球



MaRVL-ta கூடைப்பந்தாட்டம்

# Visual Reasoning Task

---

- **Datapoint:** two images ( $v_1$ ,  $v_2$ ) paired with a sentence  $x$
- **Task:** Predict whether  $x$  is a true description of the pair of images  $v_1 v_2$



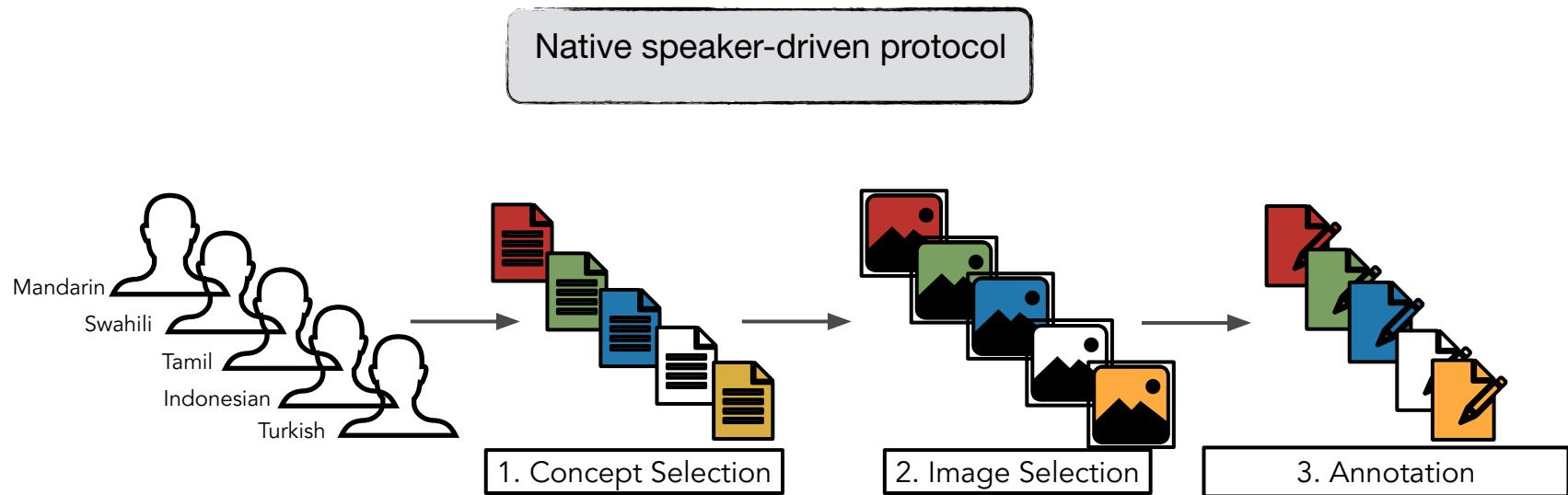
இரு படங்களில் ஒன்றில்  
இரண்டிற்கும் மேற்பட்ட  
மஞ்சள் சட்டை அணிந்த  
வீரர்கள் காலையை அடக்கும்  
பணியில் ஈடுபட்டிருப்பதை  
காணமுடி.

True

X

Y

# Collecting MaRVL data



# MaRVL is created from Universal Concepts

---

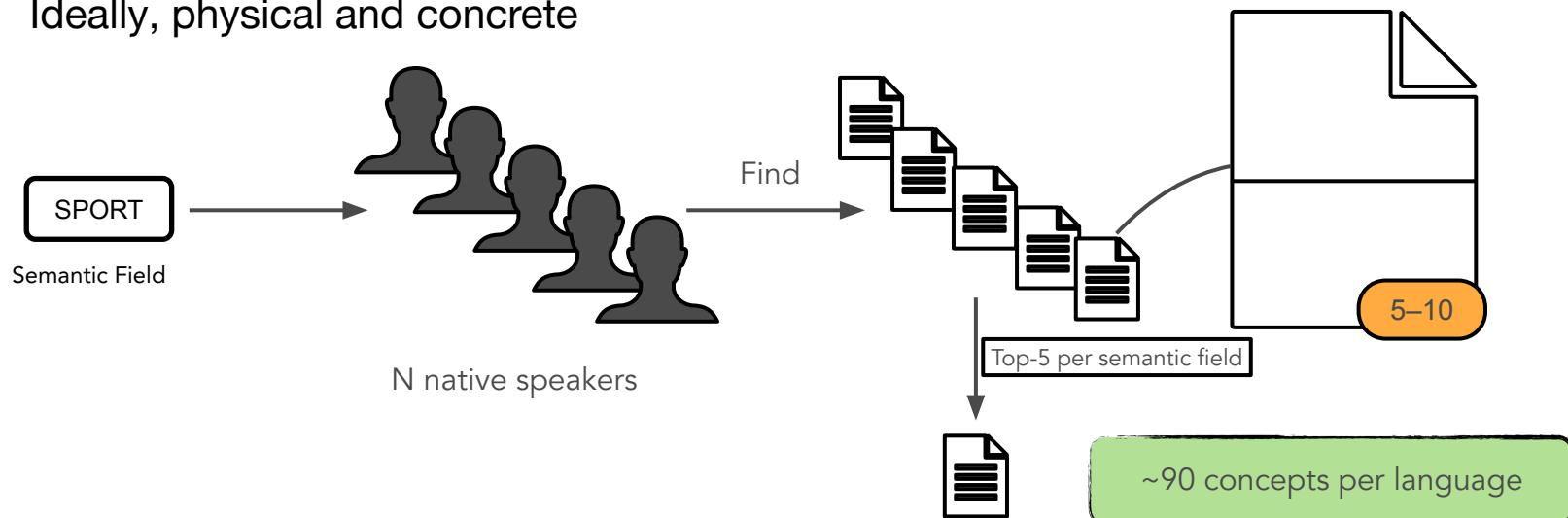
- Taken from the *Intercontinental Dictionary Series* ([Key & Comrie, 2015](#))
  - 18/22 chapters with concrete objects & events

Chapter	Semantic Field
Animal	Bird, mammal
Food and Beverages	Food, Beverages
Clothing and grooming	Clothing
The house	Interior, exterior
Agriculture and vegetation	Flower, fruit, vegetable, agriculture
Basic actions and technology	Utensil/tool
Motion	Sport
Time	Celebrations
Cognition	Education
Speech and language	Music (instruments), visual arts
Religion and belief	Religion

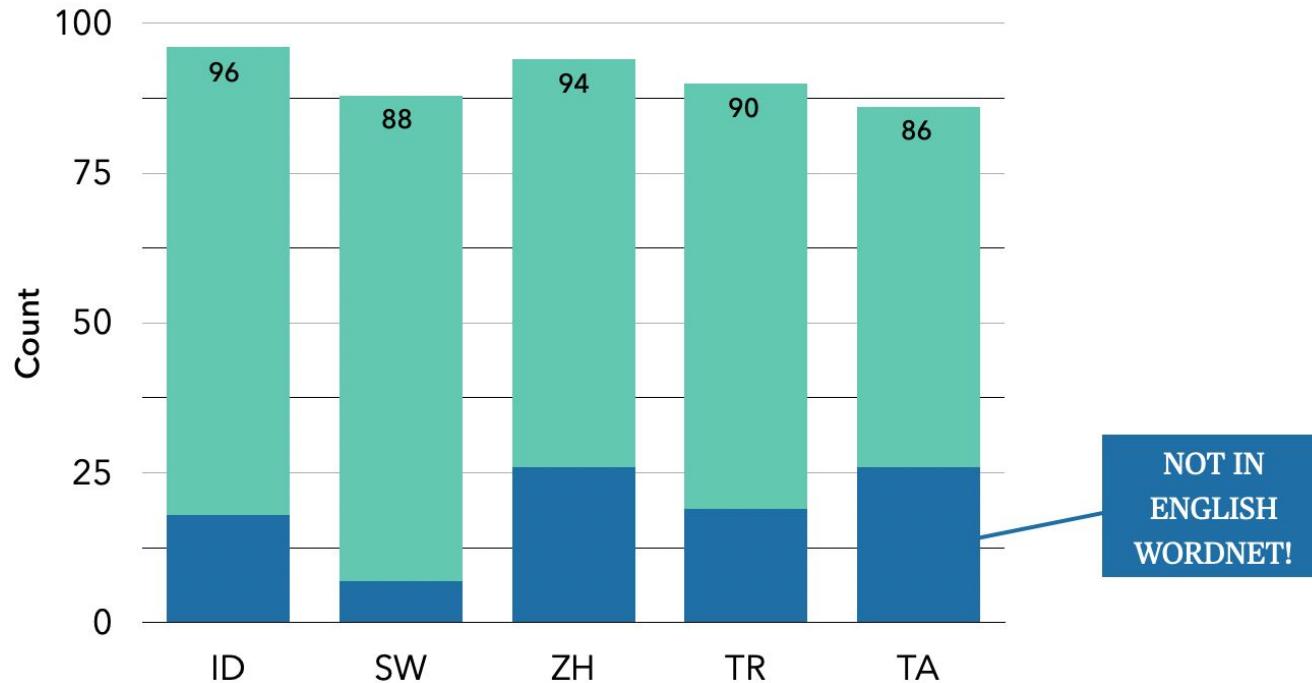


# Step 1. Language-Specific Concepts

- Defined by native speakers
- Commonly seen or representative in their culture
- Ideally, physical and concrete



# Overview of Resulting Concepts



# Step 2. Image Collection

Collected by native speakers

- Representative of the language population
- NLVR2 ([Suhr et al. ACL 2019](#)) requirements
  1. Contains more than one instance of a concept
  2. Shows an instance of the concept interacting with other objects
  3. Shows an instance of the concept performing an activity
  4. Displays a set of diverse objects or features



MaRVL-zh 花椰菜 (Cauliflower)



MaRVL-ta **Çılmış** (Buttermilk)



MaRVL-sw Jembe (Shovel)



MaRVL-tr Rakı (Raki)

# Step 3. Language Annotation

Written by native speakers



MATCH 4 PAIRS AT RANDOM



VALIDATE ANNOTATIONS



右图中的人在发球, 左图中的人在接球。



WRITE CAPTION TRUE ONLY FOR 2 PAIRS



右图中的人在发球, 左图中的人在接球。



FINAL VALIDATION



Fleiss' kappa:  
93%

右图中的人在发球, 左图中的人在接球。

(The man in the right image is serving a ball while the man in the left image is returning a ball.)

# Dataset Examples

---

MaRVL-tr Kanun (çalgı)



Görsellerden birinde dizlerinde kanun  
bulunan birden çok insan var

(In one of the images, there are multiple  
people with qanuns on their knees)

Label: True

MaRVL-ta தோம  
(Vada)

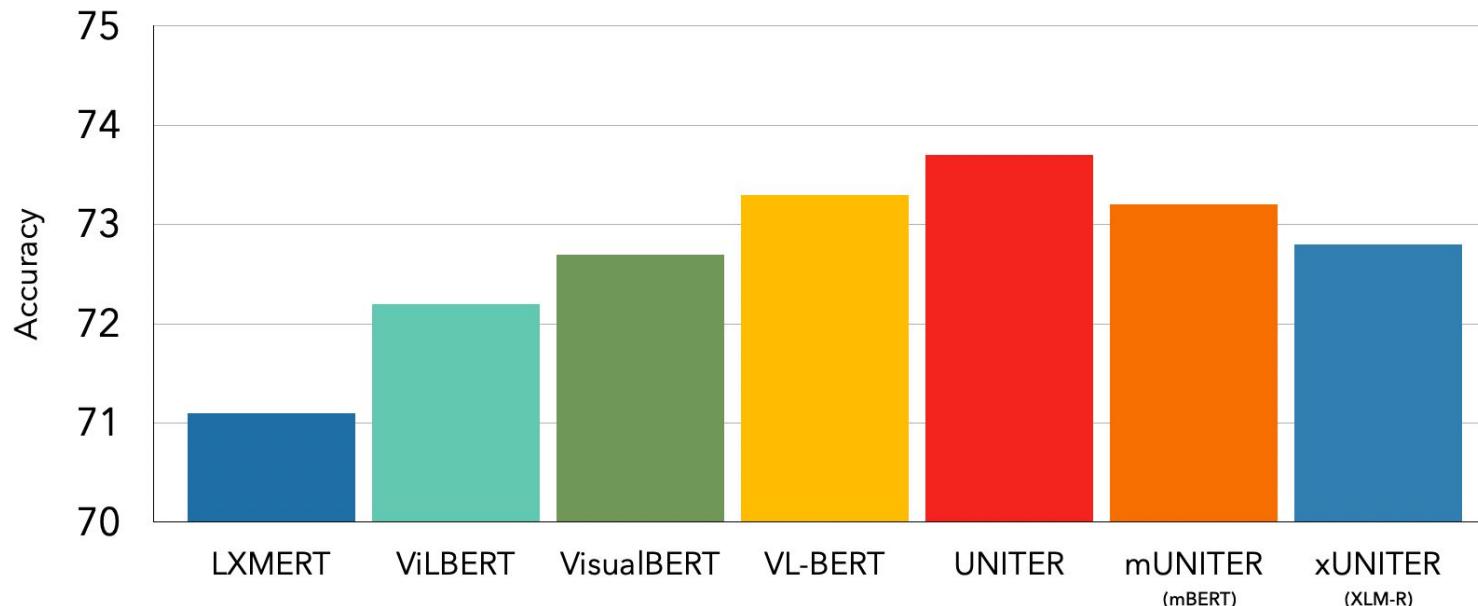


இரண்டு படங்களிலும் நிறைய மசால் வடைகள்  
உள்ளன

(Both images contain a lot of masala vadas)

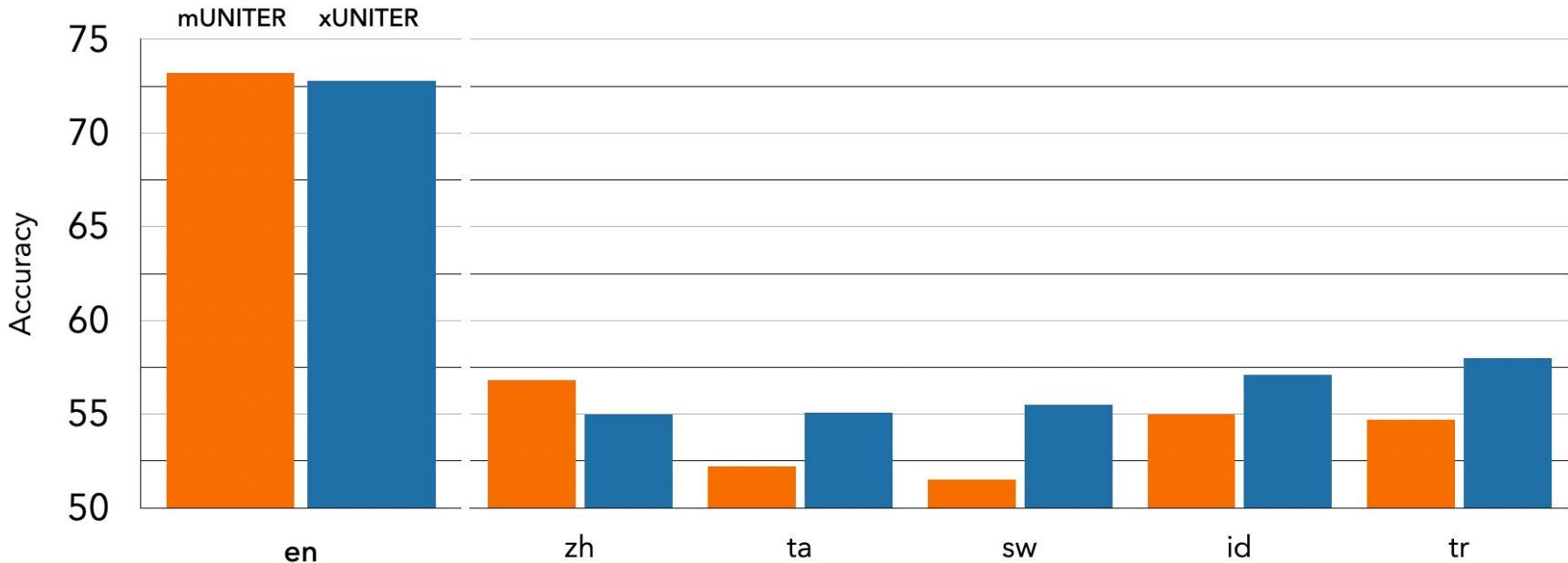
Label: False

# English NLVR2 Results (Sanity check)



m/xUNITER perform similarly to English-only models

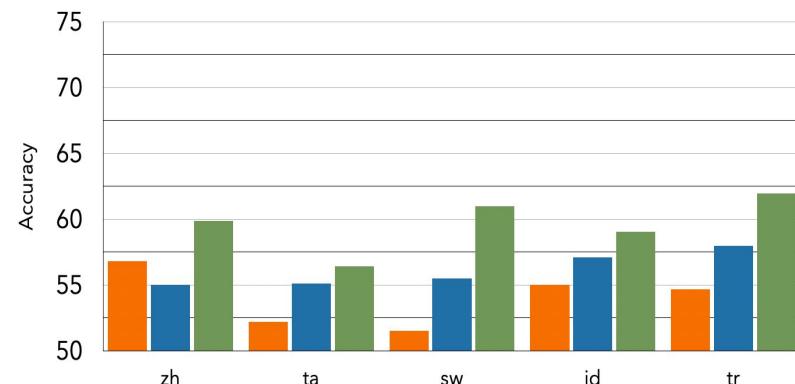
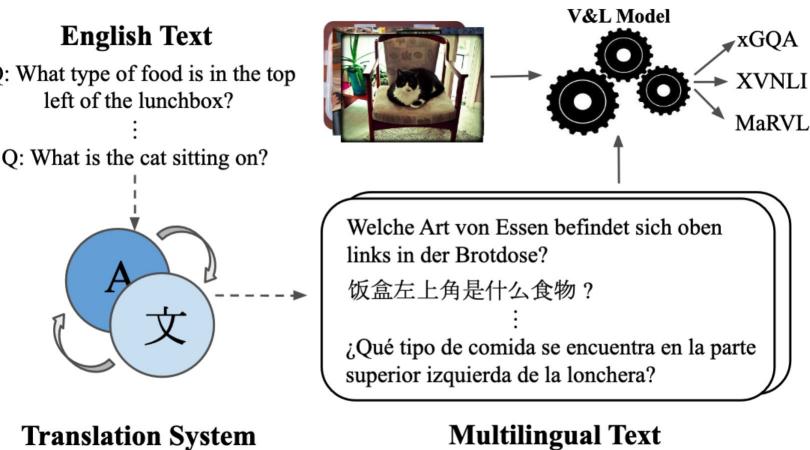
# MaRVL Zero-shot Results



Zero-shot transfer: substantial drop in performance

# Pretraining with Translated Text

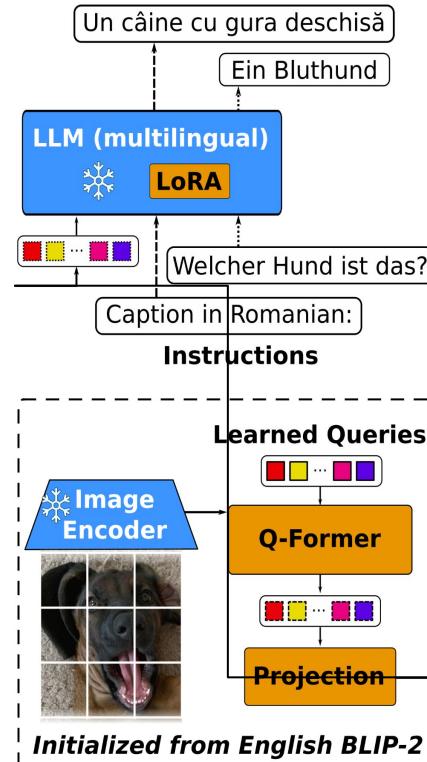
- Are the low zero-shot results caused by poor cross-lingual multimodal binding?



Cross-modal multilingual multimodal pretraining helps!

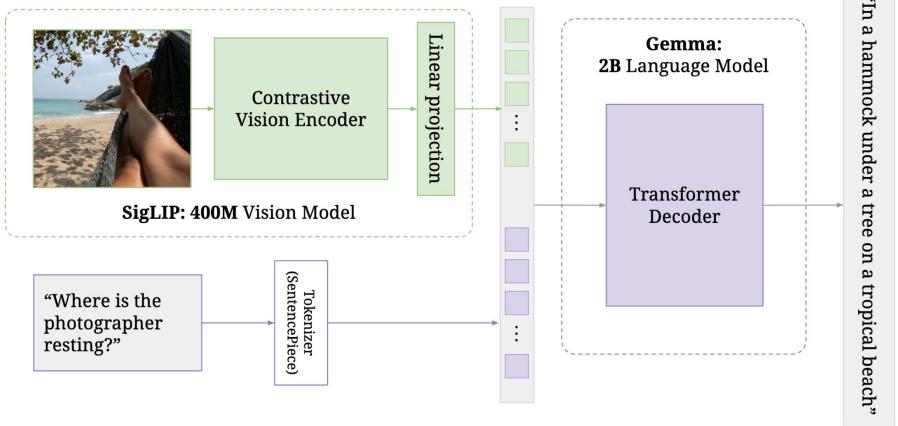
# Supervised State of the Art: mBLIP

- Initialize from
  - BLIP-2
  - MT0-XL
- Use NLLB to pretrain on 96 languages
  - MSCOCO
  - CapFilt
  - VQAV2 & A-OKVQA
  - ImageNet as multilingua VQA



# Zero-shot State of the Art: PaliGemma

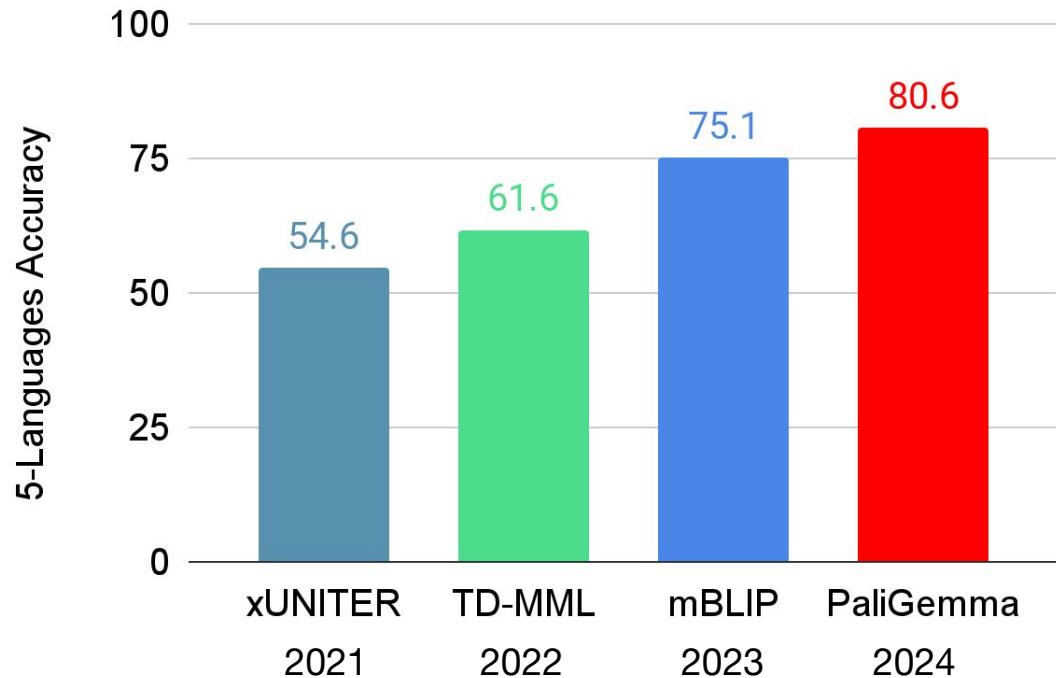
- Initialize from
  - Gemma 2B
  - SigLIP-So400m/14
- Pretrain on
  - Web Language Image (???)
  - CC3M-35L
  - VQ<sup>2</sup>A/VQG-CC3M-35L
  - OpenImages
  - Wikipedia Image Text



# Year-on-Year Improvements

---

- Clear benefit when using machine translated data
- Better visual encoders and language models can enable effective zero-shot transfer



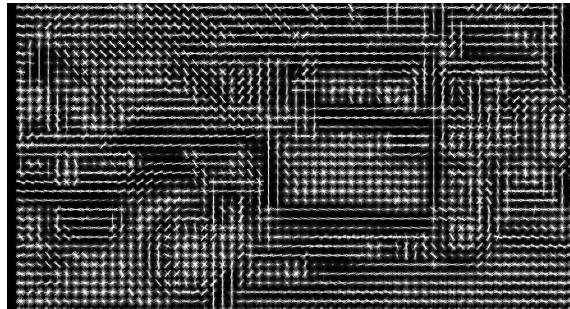
## 2. Data Representation

# Three Levels of Representation

---

- Perceptual
- Pre-processed features
- Raw input

- Yellow
- Has wheels
- Metal
- Five-door
- Can transport
- ...



# Perceptual Norms

---

- Ask people to write down the words that are triggered by textual stimuli.
- Stimuli: 541 noun concepts
- Norms are categorized into the likely knowledge source

Moose		
is large	27	visual-form and surface
has antlers	23	visual-form and surface
has legs	14	visual-form and surface
has four legs	12	visual-form and surface
has fur	7	visual-form and surface
has hair	5	visual-form and surface
has hooves	5	visual-form and surface
is brown	10	visual-color
hunted by people	17	function
eaten as meat	5	function
lives in woods	14	encyclopedic
lives in wilderness	8	encyclopedic
an animal	17	taxonomic
a mammal	9	taxonomic
an herbivore	8	taxonomic

# Perceptual Norms: Pros / Cons

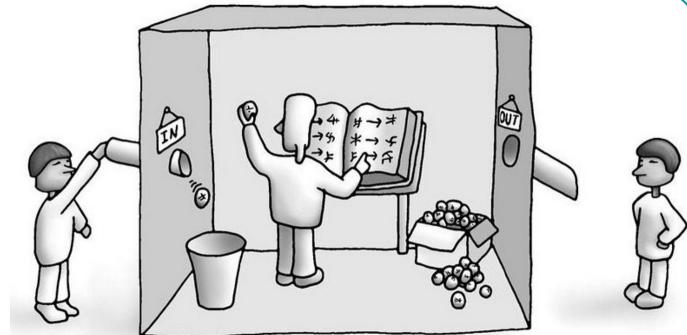
## Pros

- Seemingly simple task
- Rich features

## Cons

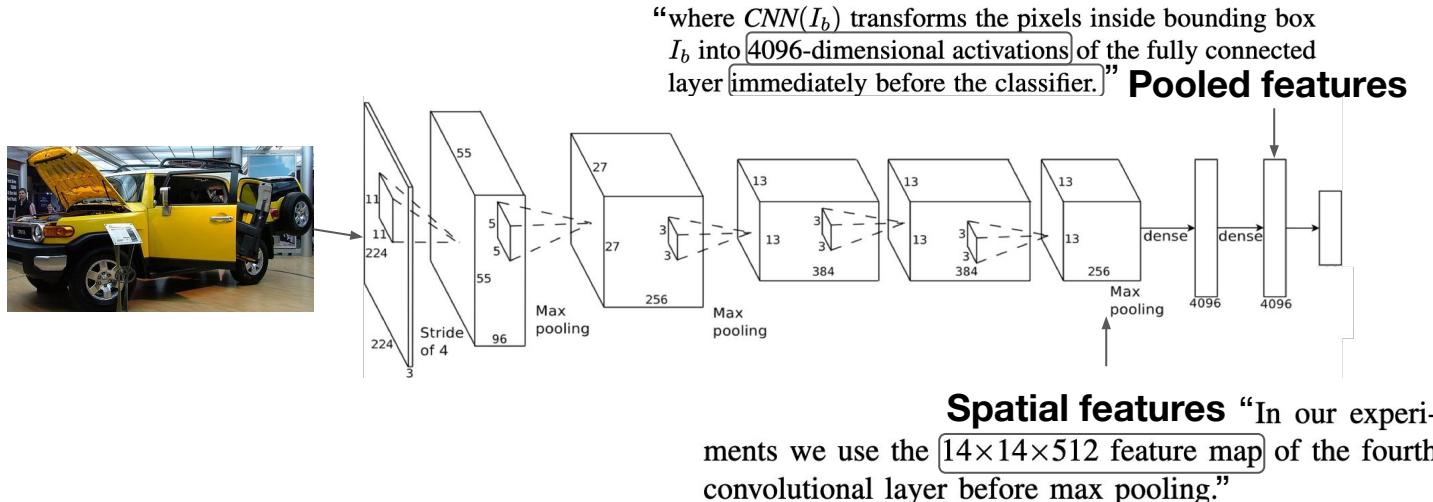
- Can it scale?
- Handling ambiguity

What does it mean to only understand symbols as defined by other symbols?



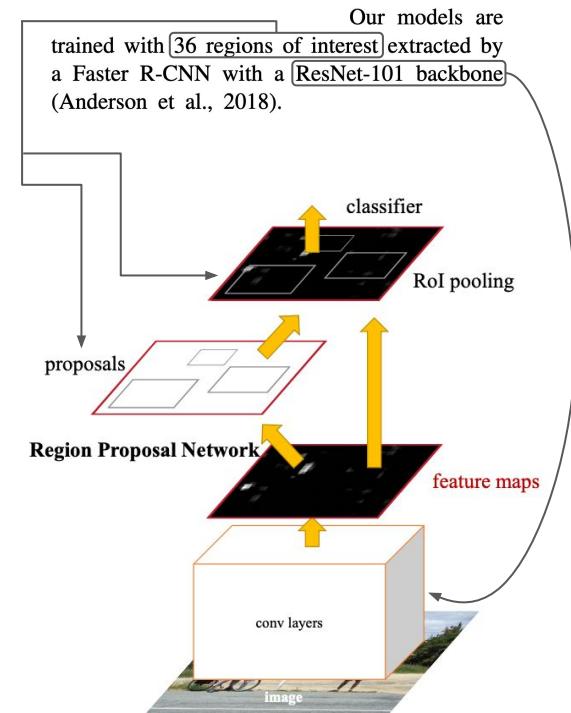
# Spatial and Pooled Visual Features

- Earliest work in neural-network era used pooled or spatial preserving features from a pretrained Convolutional Neural Network.



# Pre-processed Visual Features

- Faster R-CNN region-based feature vectors
  - Trained on the Visual Genome Dataset
  - The Region Proposal Network suggests the location of *regions of interest*.
  - RoI pooling performs spatial pooling in the final CNN layer to give a 2048D vector.



# Pre-processed: Pros / Cons

---

## Pros

- Long-established practice
- Usually an offline process:  
do it once and forget

## Cons

- Large datasets require specialized storage
- Not obvious how to randomly augment data
- Specialist knowledge can be opaque to newcomers

# Raw Input

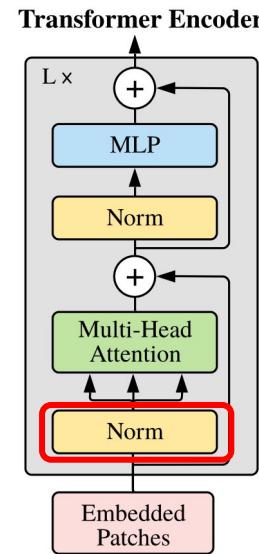
---

- Directly process data from the raw images or speech signal.
- Images:
  - Vision Transformer (ViT)
  - Swin Transformer
- Speech
  - Spectrogram Transformer
  - AudioMAE

# Vision Transformer

---

- Good news! You are already almost an expert in how the Vision Transformer works
  - Split image into K patches
  - Embed each patch
  - Add position information
  - Encode using Transformer blocks that include an **extra pre-norm layer** for stability.

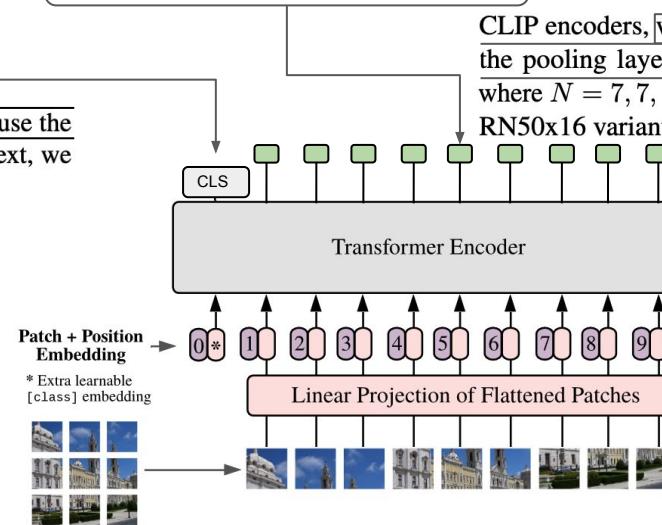


# Extracting ViT Features

- Extract pooled features or patch-level features

To extract visual information from an image  $x^i$ , we use the visual encoder of a pre-trained CLIP [29] model. Next, we

For the CLIP encoders, we extract the feature grid before the pooling layers, resulting in an  $N \times N$  grid, where  $N = 7, 7, 12$  for the ViT-B/32, RN50x4 and RN50x16 variants of CLIP respectively.



# Raw input: Pros / Cons

---

## Pros

- Data augmentation is straightforward because you always have the raw input
- Fewer preprocessing steps means fewer creeping errors

## Cons

- Smaller batches with an extra model on the GPU
- Potentially many inputs

# Summary

---

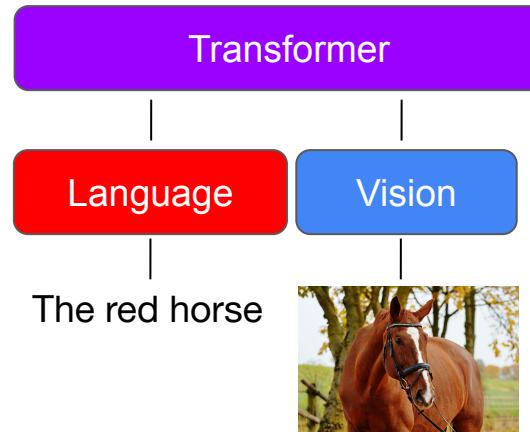
- Many options for how to represent your multimodal inputs
  - Language-oriented
  - Object / stuff oriented
  - Raw inputs
- **No universally best option** but raw inputs are promising because the visual encoding model can be fully differentiable

# 3. Modelling

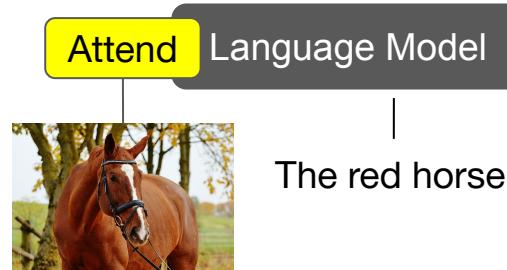
# Main Approaches

---

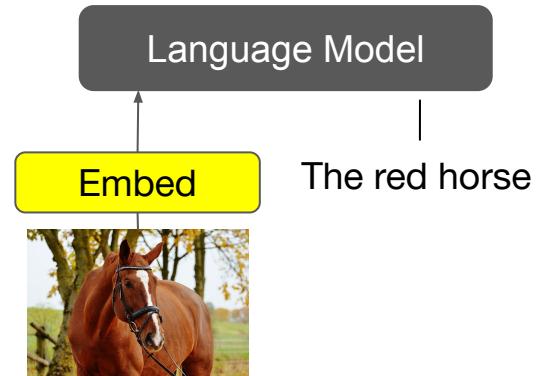
## Dual / cross encoding



## Cross-Attention



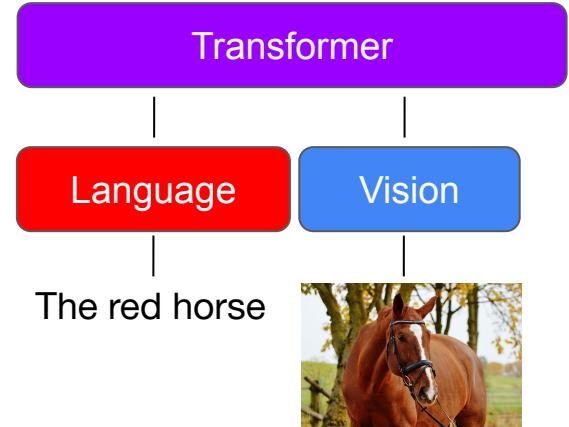
## Visual Prefix



# Cross-encoding Models

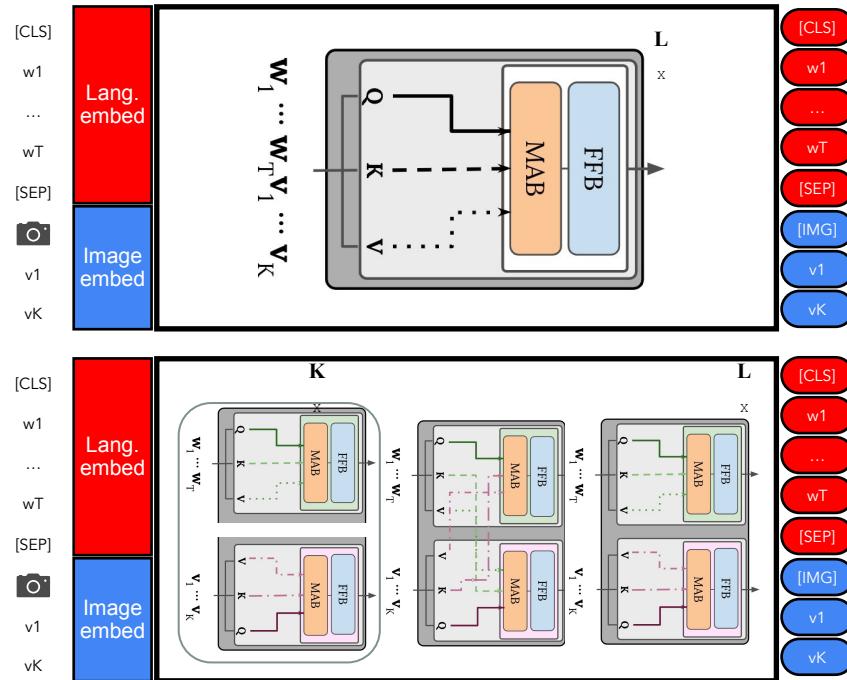
---

- Emerged as a key modelling approach in 2019 with a flurry of approaches to creating visually-grounded BERT models.
- This is a form of *model-based fusion*
- The backbone consists of two components:
  - language encoder
  - visual encoder



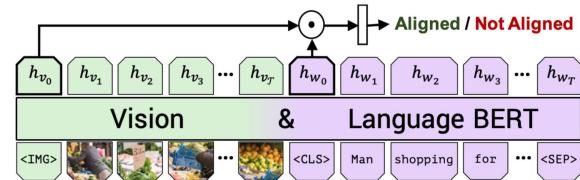
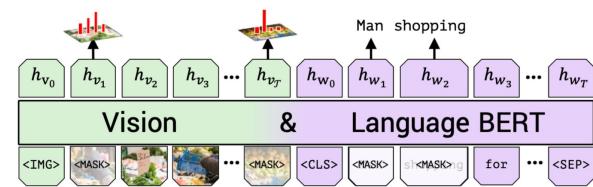
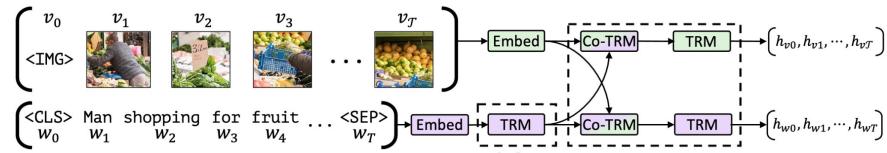
# Single- & Dual-Stream Architectures

- Single-stream
  - Concatenate inputs into one sequence
- Dual-stream
  - Process modalities independently
    - Intra-modal
    - Inter-modal



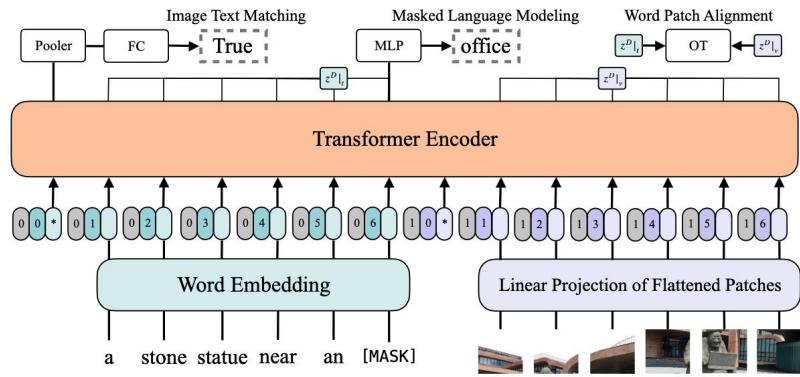
# ViLBERT

- Dual-stream model
- Initialized from BERT
- Visual features extracted from 10-36 regions using Faster-RCNN
- Pretrained on Conceptual Captions
  - Masked Language Modelling
  - Masked Region Classification
  - Image-Text Matching

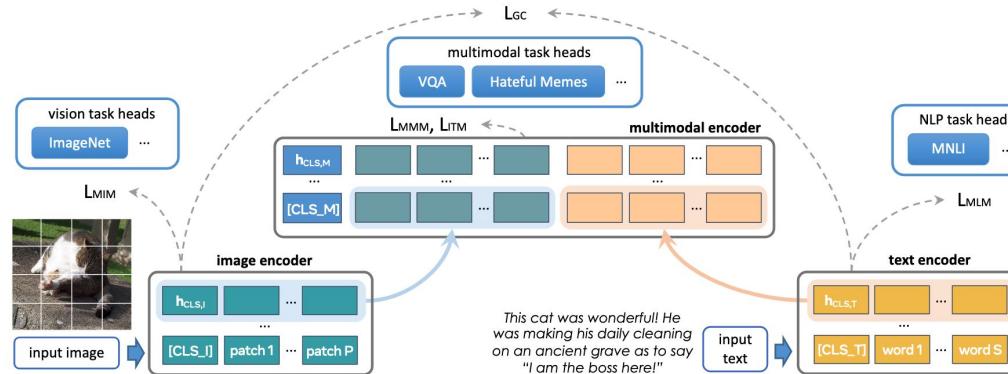


# ViLT

- Single-stream model
- Initialized from BERT
- Visual features extracted from ViT-B/32
- Pretrained on Conceptual Captions, Visual Genome, COCO, SBU Captions
  - Masked Language Modelling
  - Image-Text Matching
  - Word-Patch Alignment



# FLAVA

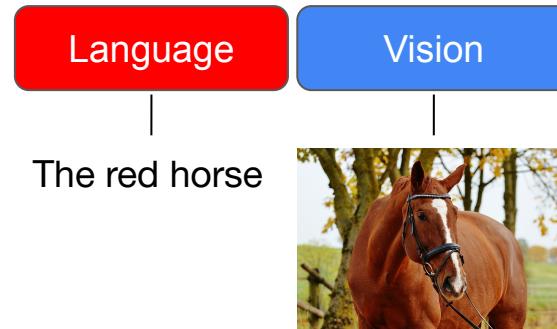


- Dual-stream Visual features extracted from ViT-B/16
- Pretrained on PMD70M
  - Masked Language Modelling, Masking Image Modelling
  - Image-Text Matching, Masked Multimodal Modelling
  - Global Contrastive Matching

# Dual-encoding Models

---

- Emerged as a sample-efficient alternative to cross-encoding.
- The backbone consists of two separate components:
  - language encoder
  - visual encoder



# CLIP

Language

The red horse

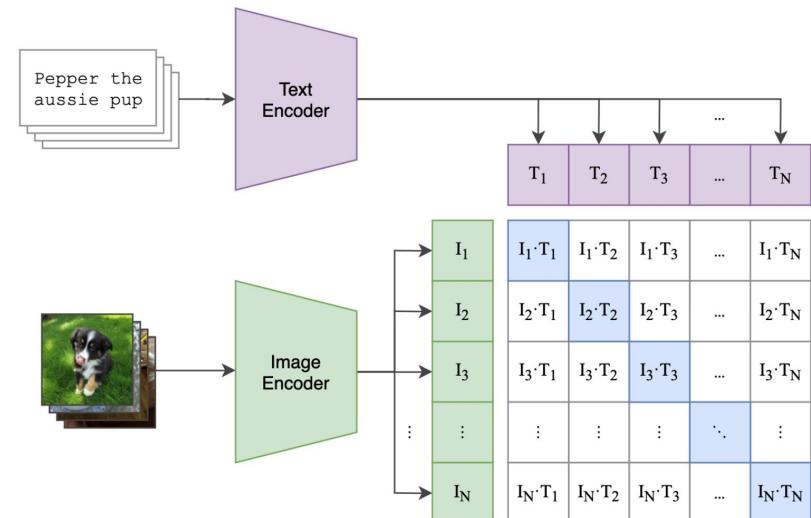
Vision



- 12 Layer Transformer Encoder
- ViT or ResNet Visual Encoder
- Maximize the similarity of the embeddings of paired examples ( $I, T$ ):

$$\mathcal{L}_{\text{InfoNCE}} = -\mathbb{E} \left[ \log \frac{f(\mathbf{t}, \mathbf{i})}{\sum_{\mathbf{t}' \in T} f(\mathbf{t}', \mathbf{i})} \right]$$

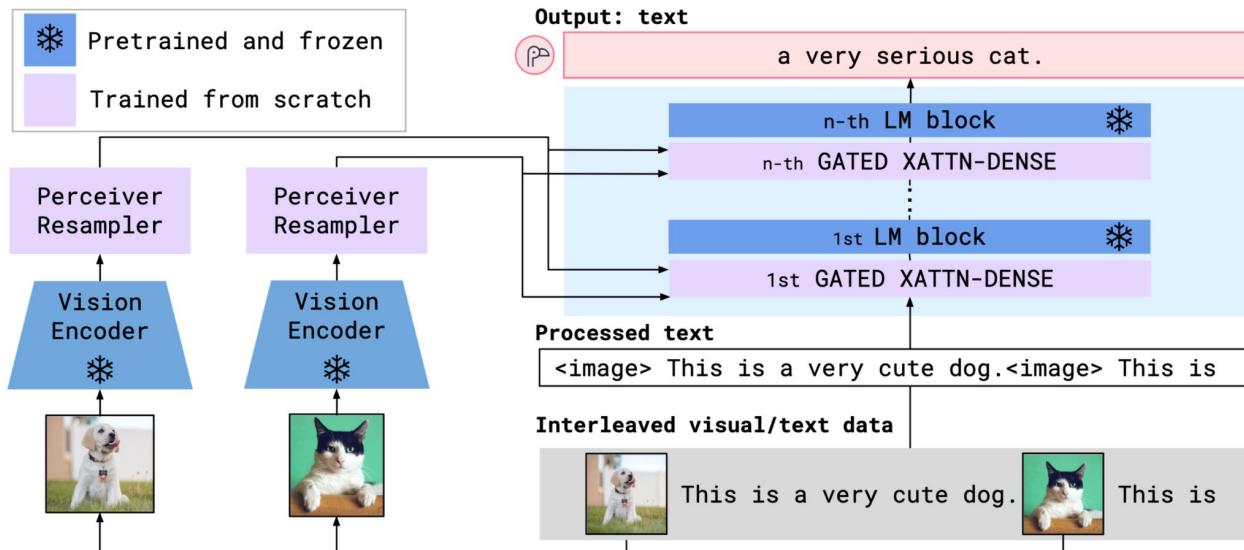
- Huge pretraining dataset of unclear provenance



# Cross-Attention

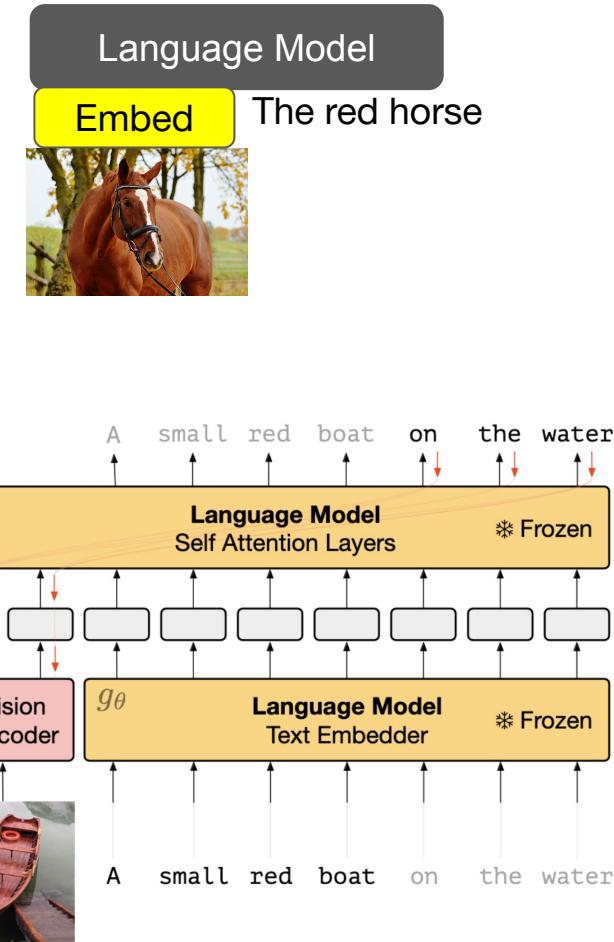
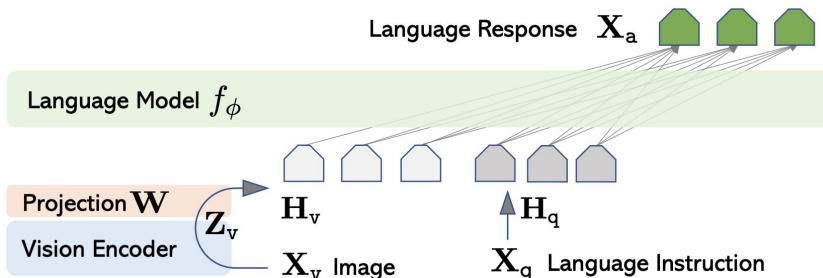
Attend Language Model

The red horse



# Visual Prefix

- Exploit the representations learned during large-scale modality specific pretraining



Tsimpoukelli et al. NeurIPS 2021. Multimodal Few-Shot Learning with Frozen Language Models.  
Liu et al. NeurIPS 2023. Visual Instruction Tuning.

# Current Vision and Language Models

---

- Current models mostly follow this blueprint:
  1. Choose pretrained modality-specific components
  2. Learnable bridge between those components
  3. Dataset to estimate the parameters in the bridge
  4. Multi-stage finetuning strategy

# Modality-Specific Components

	Vision Encoder	Language Model
<b>LLAVA</b>	CLIP ViT-L/14	Vicuna-13B
<b>Qwen-VL</b>	OpenCLIP ViT-bigG	Qwen-7B
<b>MM1</b>	ViT-L	1.3B LLM
<b>PaliGemma</b>	SigLIP-So400M/14	Gemma-2B

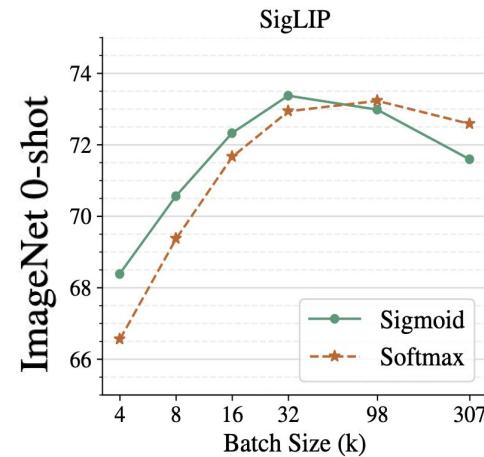
<https://ai.google.dev/gemma/docs/paligemma>  
<https://llava-vl.github.io/>  
<https://github.com/QwenLM/Qwen-VL>

# SigLIP Image Encoder

“Unlike standard contrastive learning with softmax normalization, the sigmoid loss operates solely on image-text pairs and does not require a global view of the pairwise similarities for normalization.”

$$-\frac{1}{|\mathcal{B}|} \sum_{i=1}^{|\mathcal{B}|} \sum_{j=1}^{|\mathcal{B}|} \log \underbrace{\frac{1}{1 + e^{z_{ij}(-t\mathbf{x}_i \cdot \mathbf{y}_j + b)}}}_{\mathcal{L}_{ij}}$$

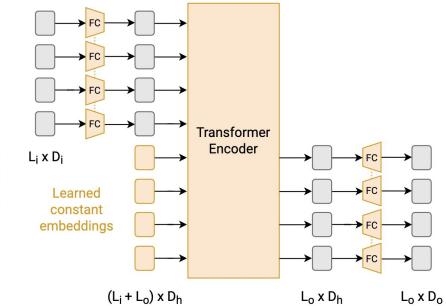
Label of the image-text pair: 1 if matched else -1



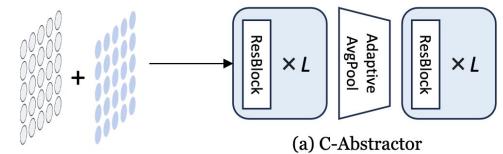
# Learnable Bridge

- LLaVA and PaliGemma: Use a single linear layer to map the image output embeddings into the language model word embedding space.
- Qwen-VL:

**Position-aware Vision-Language Adapter:** To alleviate the efficiency issues arising from long image feature sequences, Qwen-VL introduces a vision-language adapter that compresses the image features. This adapter comprises a single-layer cross-attention module initialized randomly. The module uses a group of trainable vectors (Embeddings) as query vectors and the image features from the visual encoder as keys for cross-attention operations. This mechanism compresses the visual feature sequence to a fixed length of 256. The ablation about the number of queries is shown in Appendix E.2. Additionally, considering the significance



- MM1: Convolutional-Abstractor
  - ResNet Block followed by an Adaptive Pooler



# Training Dataset

---

- LLaVA: 595K image–caption examples filtered from CC3M

Qwen-VL            1.4 billion examples (77% English / 23% Chinese)

MM1                2+ billion mixture of image–text examples

PaliGemma        1 billion mixture of multilingual image caption, VQA, and  
in-the-wild datasets

- The larger models are pretrained on **in-house data**
  - PaliGemma: WebLI (1B+), Qwen-VL (220M), MM1 (1B+)

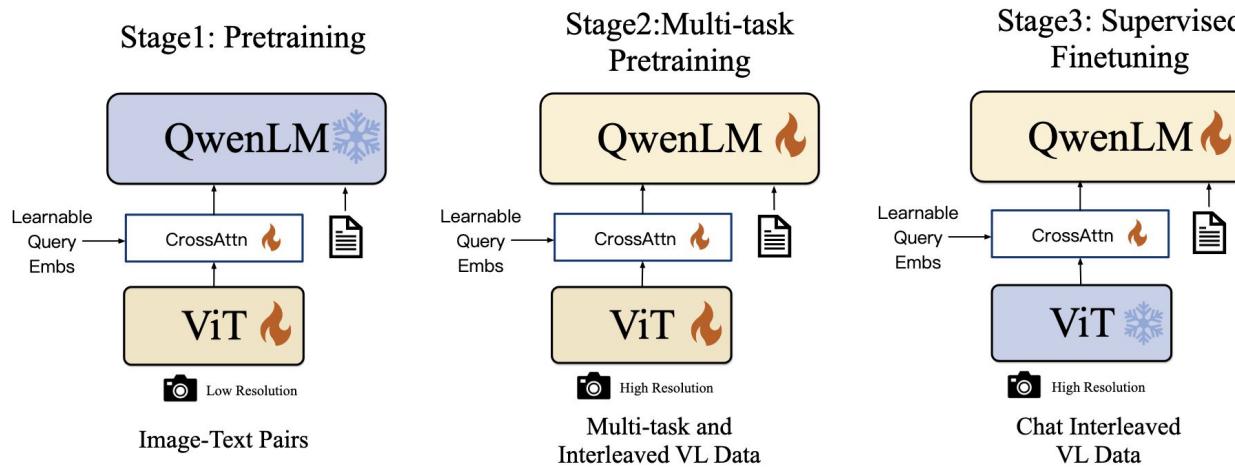
# Data Processing

---

- Encode the text using the language model tokenizer
- Encode the image using the image encoding model
- Image-position embeddings for multi-image sequences
- PaliGemma-specific
  - Location co-ordinate tokens
  - Segmentation tokens

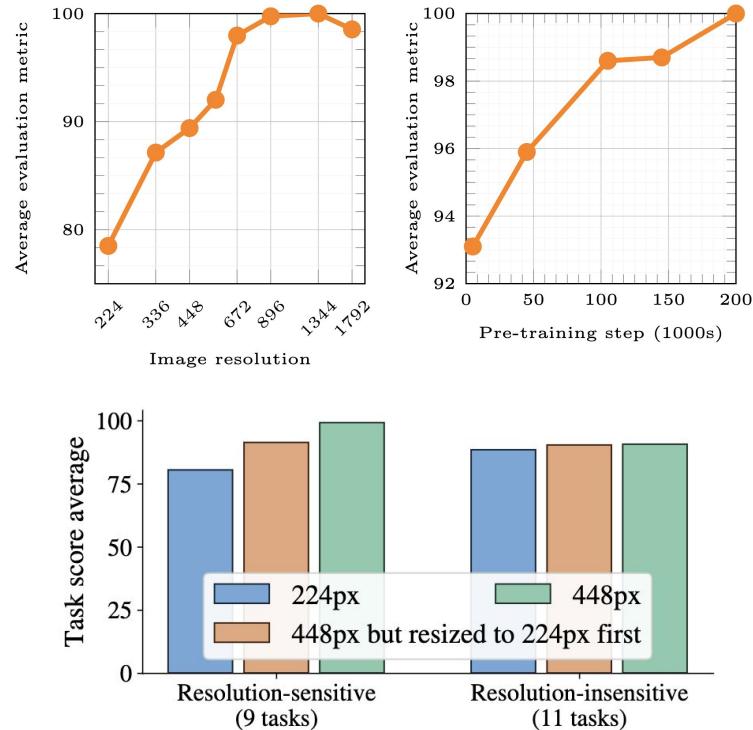
# Training Strategy

- Qwen-VL, PaliGemma, and MM1 use multi-stage training strategies with different types of data and different image resolutions



# Open Questions

- How quickly will we realize these benefits in smaller models?
- Do LMMs really need 1 billion examples to learn a bridge?
- What happens to performance when we develop new tasks that involve weaker visual–linguistic bindings?



# Summary

---

- Cross-encoding:
  - Many advances in which parts of the input contribute to loss
  - Shift from regions-of-interest to Vision Transformers
- Dual-encoding:
  - Excellent cross-domain transfer to a wide range of problems
- Visual Prefix Learning:
  - Exploit the benefits of single-modality pretraining

**Q: Does an image captioning model  
need to learn everything in-weights?**

# PAELLA: Parameter-Efficient Lightweight Language-agnostic Captioning Model

Findings of NAACL 2024



R. Ramos



E. Bugliarello



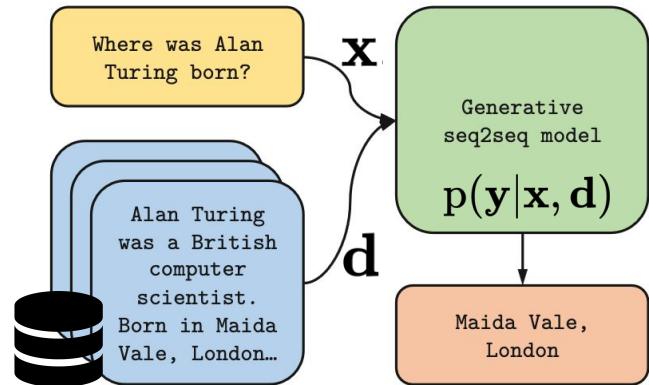
B. Martins



D. Elliott

# Retrieval Augmented Generation

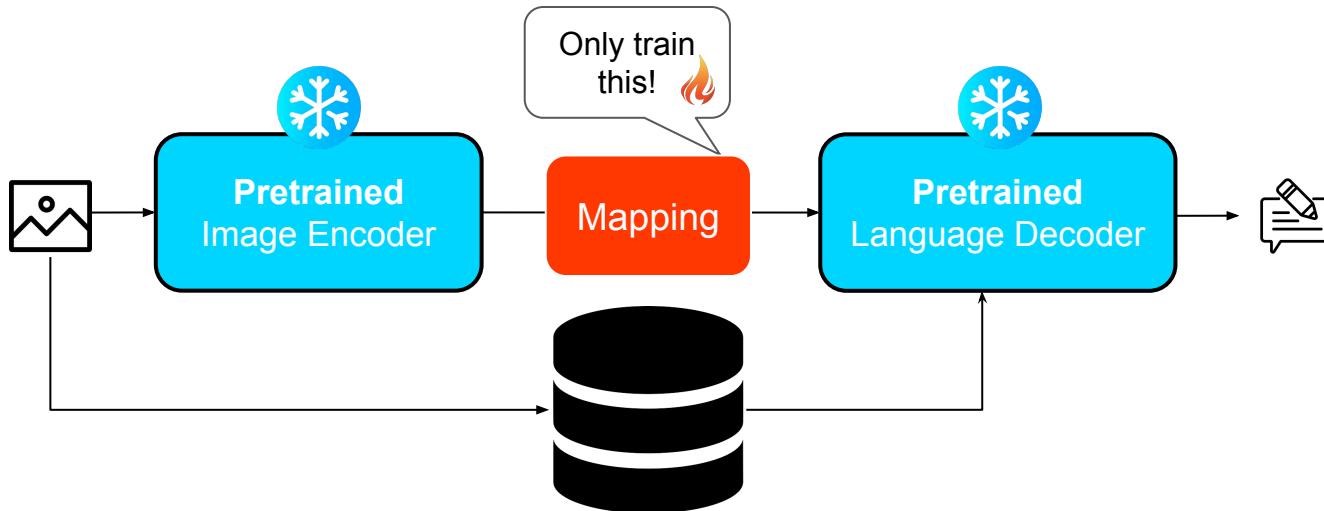
- Combine the power of in-weights learning with in-context adaptation through retrieval augmentation
- Given a datastore of facts, knowledge, documents, etc.
  - Combine the most relevant items from the datastore ( $d$ ) with the input ( $x$ ) for your task



# Motivation

---

- Main trend in V&L is training bigger models on more data
- Alternative is emerging that re-uses independent backbone models
- Can we further improve performance with retrieval augmentation?



# PAELLA Model

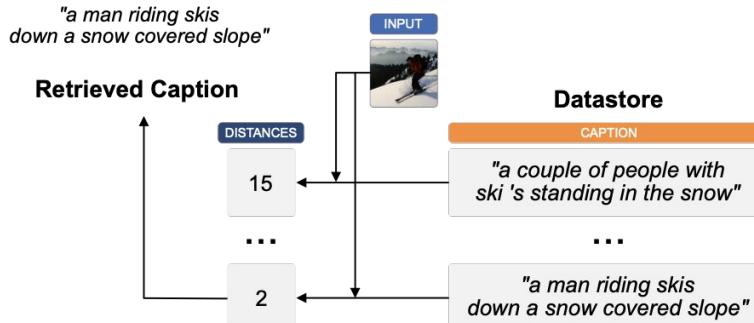
---



# Retrieval System

---

- Build a FAISS datastore: store high-dimensional vectors
  - Captions of images represented with CLIP embeddings
- Retrieve k nearest-neighbours captions from datastore
  - Image embedding compared against datastore caption vectors

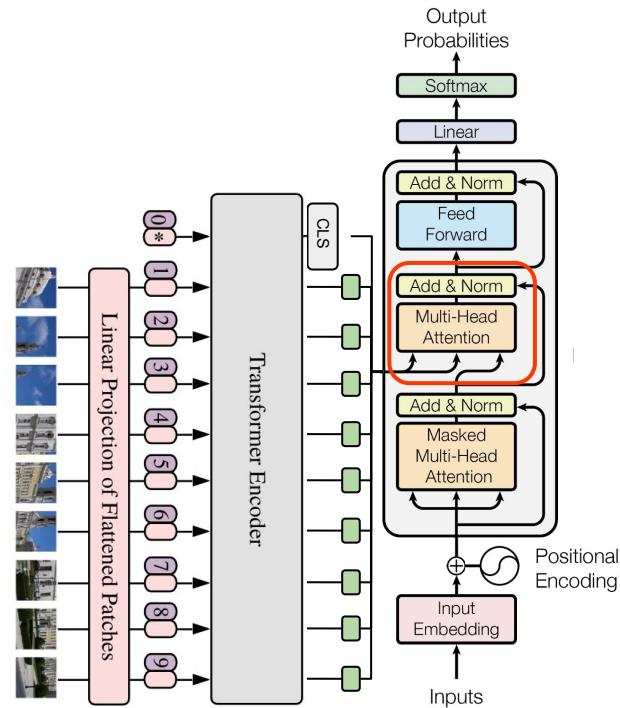


# Trained Cross-Attention Layers

- We insert a randomly initialized **cross-attention mechanism** to attend to the visual encoder output embeddings

Rank	Params
d=128	553M
<b>d=8</b>	34M

$$\text{Att}(\mathbf{XW}^Q, \mathbf{XW}^K, \mathbf{XW}^V)$$
$$\mathbf{W}^Q, \mathbf{W}^K, \mathbf{W}^V \in \mathbb{R}^{d_{\text{enc}} \times d}$$



# Experimental Protocol

---

- Encoder: Multilingual CLIP
- Decoder: XGLM-2.9B
- Training data:
  - 566K captions sampled uniformly from COCO-35
- Evaluation: XM-3600
  - 3600 geographically-diverse images
  - 36 languages: 100 captions per image
  - 5 low-resource languages (L5):
    - Bengali, Cusco Quechua,  
Maori, Swahili, Telugu



Examples images from XM3600

# Results

---

	Data	Trained $\Theta$	L36	L5
PaLI	12B	17B	53.6	-
Lg <sub>COCO-35</sub>	19M	2.6B	15.0	12.5
mBLIP: BLOOMZ-7B	135M	800M	23.4	6.7
BB+CC <sub>COCO-35 + CC-35</sub>	135M	800M	28.5	22.4
mBLIP: mT0-XL	489M	124M	28.3	7.9
<b>PAELLA</b>	<b>566K</b>	<b>30M</b>	26.2	20.7

PAELLA is competitive against models with 35-863x more training data, and 4-87x more trained parameters

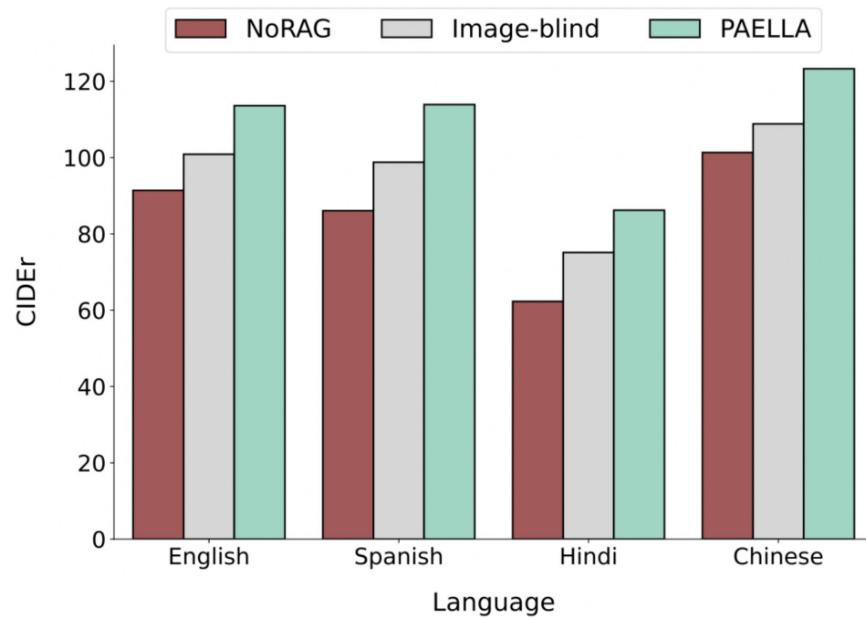
# Zero-shot Multilingual Transfer

- **PAELLA<sub>MONO</sub>** is a variant trained on 566K examples in English COCO
- Outperforms **Lg** trained on 19.8M examples in the machine translated COCO-35 dataset

	Data	Trained $\Theta$	L36	L5
Lg: Thapliyal et al. <small>coco-35</small>	19M	2.6B	15.0	12.5
<b>PAELLA<sub>MONO</sub></b>	566K <sub>en</sub>	30M	15.5	12.1

# Value of Retrieval Augmentation

Consistent improvements from multilingual retrieval augmentation across the core languages in the XM3600 evaluation data



# Qualitative Example



类似图片显示：

ऐसी ही तस्वीरें दिखाती हैं:

Imágenes similares muestran:

Similar images show:

the owl is perched outside in front of the people  
an owl sitting a top a table during the daytime  
an owl is sitting on a perch at a camp site  
the fuzzy owl is sitting on a tree branch

A caption I can generate to describe this image in english is:

PAELLA

NoRAG

en: "an owl sitting on top of a tree"

es: "un búho sentado en una rama de un árbol"  
(an owl sitting on a tree branch)

hi: "एक उल्लू एक पेड़ की टहनी पर बैठा है"  
(an owl is sitting on a tree branch)

zh: "一只 猫头鹰 站在 树上"  
(an owl standing in a tree)

en: "a large black and white picture of a bird"

es: "un pájaro posado en la parte superior de un edificio"  
(a bird perched on the top of a building)

hi: "एक पेड़ के पास खड़ा एक पक्षी"  
(a bird standing near a tree)

zh: "一只 长颈鹿 坐在 树枝 上"  
(a giraffe sitting on a branch)

# Try it yourself (in English)

---



# Sequential Compositional Generalization in Multimodal Models

NAACL 2024



S. Yagcioglu



O. B. Ince



A. Erdem



E.  
Erdem



D. Elliott



D. Yuret

# Why Compositionality?

---

- Given recent advances in MLLMs, we should work on tasks that require more sophisticated logical or commonsense reasoning
  - RecipeQA (Yagcioglu et al. 2018)
  - ScienceQA (Lu et al. 2022)
- **Sequential Multimodal Compositional Generalization** requires models to reason across a sequence of related multimodal inputs

# EPIC Kitchens 100

---

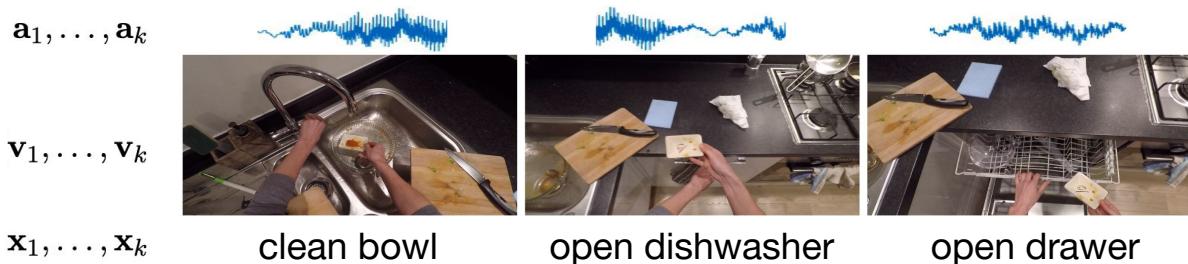
- Head-mounted recordings from 45 different kitchens
- Rich annotations of objects
- Simple action descriptions
  - 93 verb classes
  - 300 object classes



# CompAct Dataset

---

- Multimodal sequences consisting of aligned segments
  - Audio recording (not speech)
  - Video frames
  - Short description



# Compositional Generalization Tasks



1. Next Description Prediction using a language model

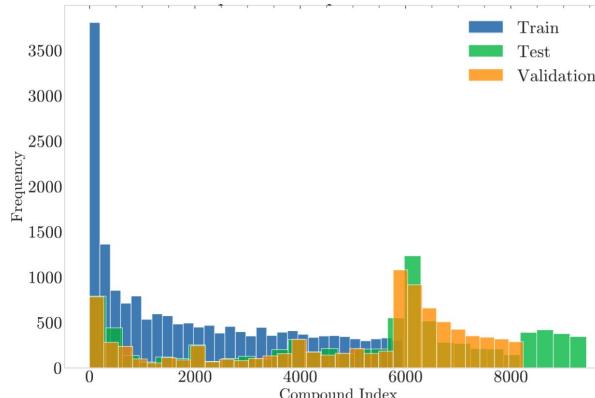
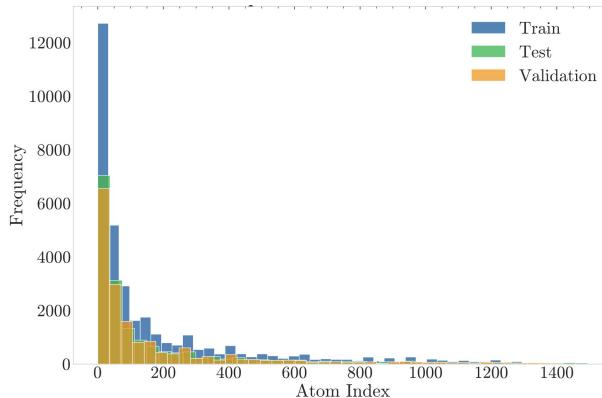
$$p_{\theta}(\mathbf{y} = \mathbf{x}_{k+1} | \mathbf{x}_{1:k}, \mathbf{v}_{1:k}, \mathbf{a}_{1:k})$$

2. Atom Classification

- Verb  $p_{\theta}(\mathbf{y} = v | \mathbf{x}_{1:k}, \mathbf{v}_{1:k}, \mathbf{a}_{1:k})$
- Object  $p_{\theta}(\mathbf{y} = o | \mathbf{x}_{1:k}, \mathbf{v}_{1:k}, \mathbf{a}_{1:k})$

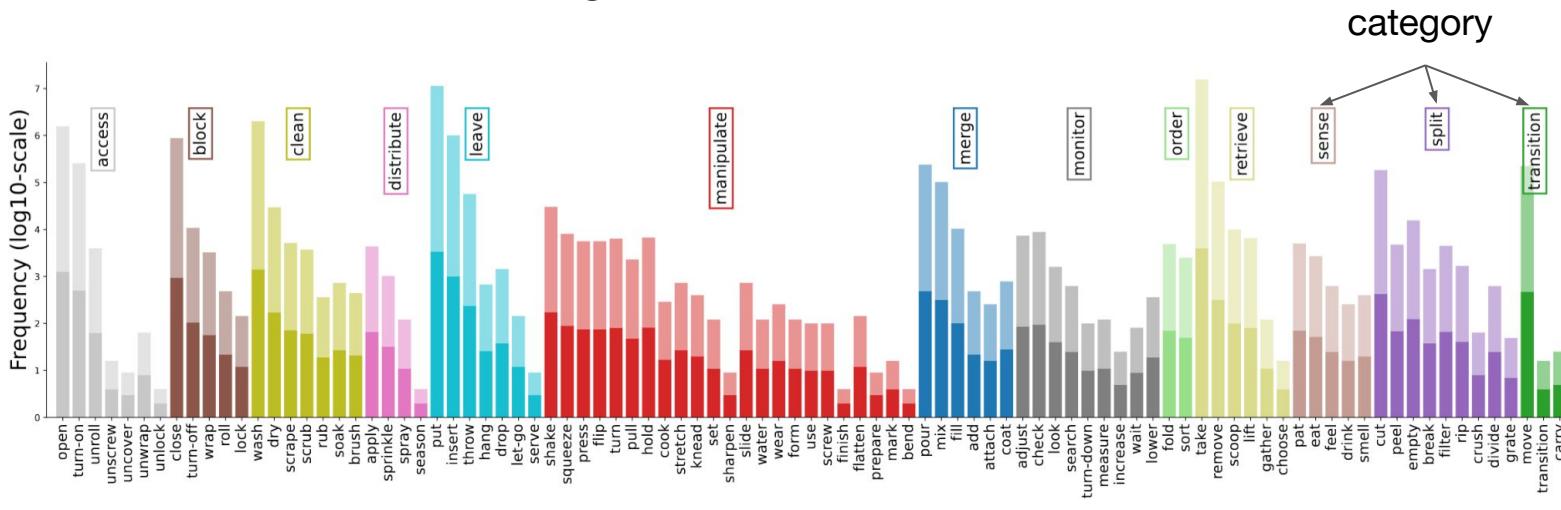
# Atoms and Compositionality

- We use Maximum Compound Divergence (Keyser et al. 2020) to create a dataset that requires compositional generalization
  - Noun and verbs extracted from simple descriptions



# CompAct Dataset Statistics

- 8,766 multimodal sequences
    - 50% training, 25% validation, 25% test



# Distribution of verb classes in CompAct

# Models

---

## Baselines

Trained on CompAct:

- **Text-only**
- **Vision & Language**
- **Object & Language**
- **Audio & Language**
- **Vision, Audio, & Language**
- **Object, Audio, & Language**

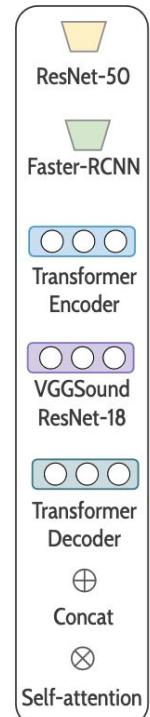
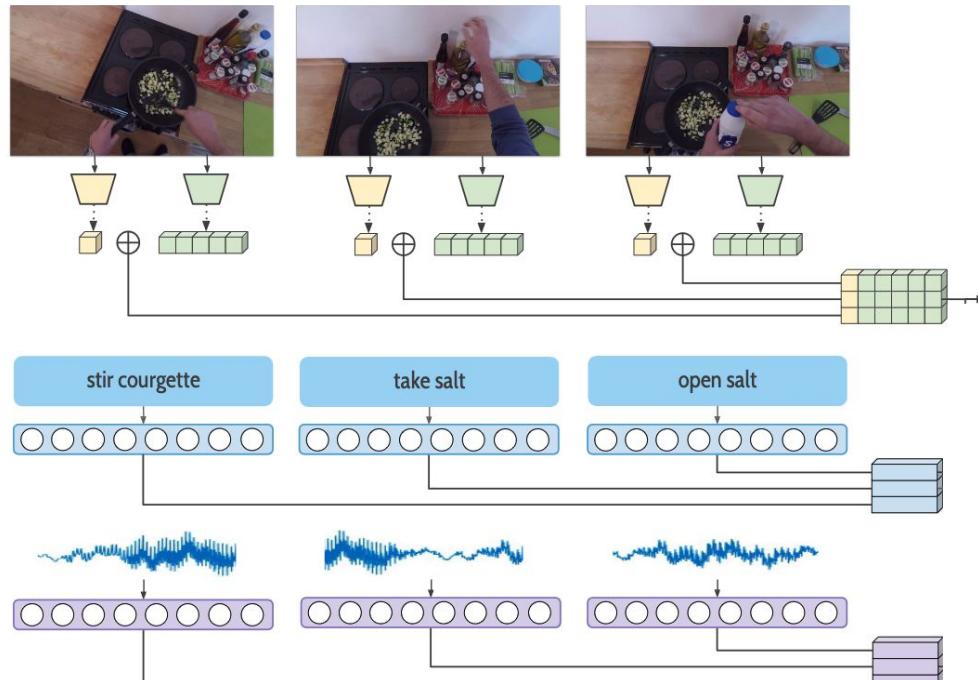
## Pretrained (M)LLMs

$k=8$ -shot prompting:

- LLaMa-2 Chat 7B
- IDEFICS-9B
- OpenFlamingo-9B
- Otter-7B

No guarantee that these models  
need to compositionally generalize

# Baseline Architecture



# Example Prompt Templates

---

## LLaMA-2 Prompt (k=3)

Predict the next narration given 3 sequential previous narrations from a cooking video  
put down bowl . move frying pan . pick up spatula => put down spatula  
move yoghurt . put down bowl . pick up yogurt => put yoghurt  
put down bowl . grab wok . move tap => lather wok  
pick up tins . put down tins . move bowl =>

## IDEFICS Prompt (k=1)

Predict the next action narration given 3 sequential previous actions (image-narration pairs) in a cooking video.  
put down bowl <Image 1> . move frying pan <Image 2> . pick up spatula <Image 3> => put down spatula  
pick up tins <Image 1> . put down tins <Image 2> . move bowl <Image 3> =>

# Experimental Details

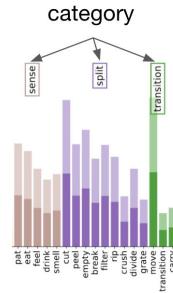
---

- Video segments represented by one keyframe
  - Based on detected objects from Faster R-CNN
- Baselines tokenize multi-part tokens as one token
  - olive oil -> olive油
- MLLMs use own tokenizers
- All experiments used one 16GB NVIDIA V100.  
Each baseline can be trained in < 1 hour

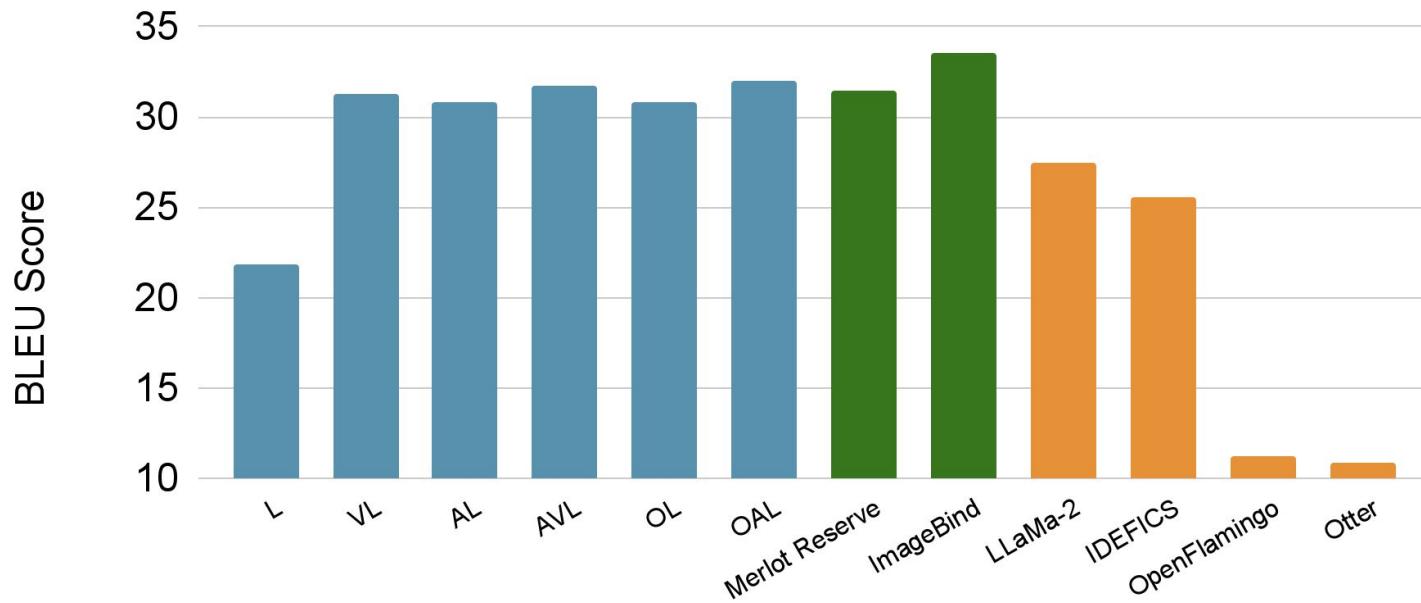
# Evaluation Measures

---

- BLEU score
- Exact Match
  - How often does the model predict exactly the expected noun or verb?
- Categorical Accuracy
  - Does the model predict a noun or verb in the same semantic category?



# Next Utterance Prediction

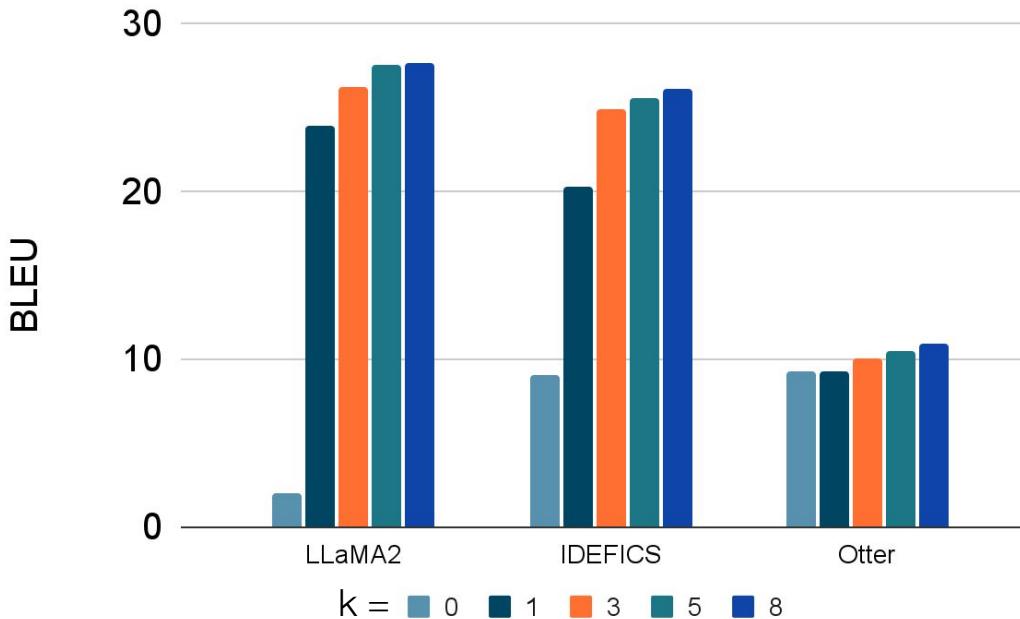


Better features are useful

Few-shot prompted MLLMs fall short

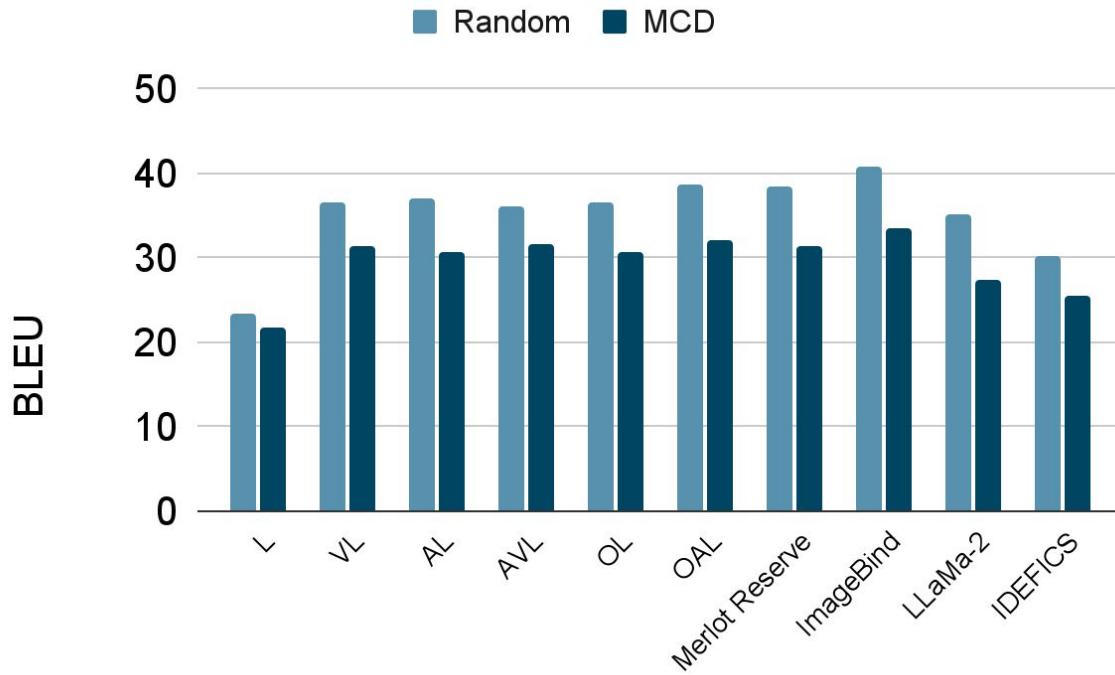
# Few-shot Prompting

---



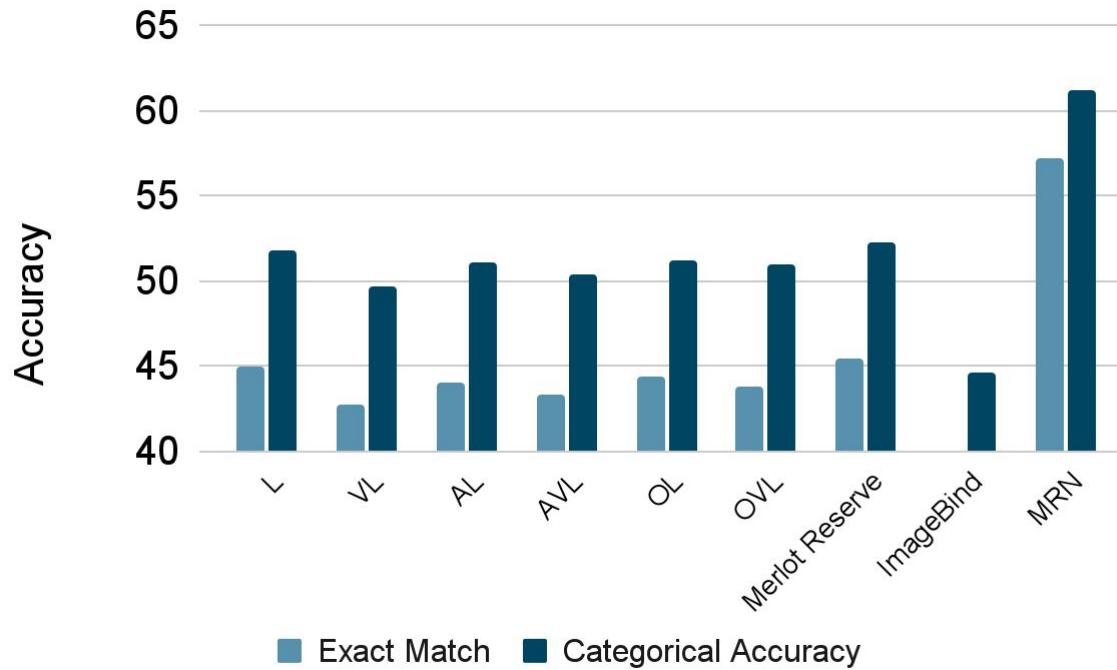
Clear benefit from increasing the number of in-context examples

# Random I.I.D. split data is easier



All models generalize better to randomly split data

# Noun Prediction



No model can outperform simple most recent noun heuristic

# Qualitative Examples

---



clean bowl



open dishwasher



open drawer

L: close dishwasher  
AL: close dishwasher  
VL: close dishwasher  
AVL: dry bowl  
IB: put bowl in dishwasher  
LLaMA-2: get clean  
IDEFICS: put bowl away



put pan in drainer



pick up mug



pick up sponge

L: put sponge  
AL: sponge mug  
VL: sponge mug  
AVL: sponge mug  
IB: sponge mug  
LLaMA-2: put sponge in sink  
IDEFICS: sponge mug

# Conclusions

---

- Sequential Multimodal Compositional Generalization is challenging new task where better multimodal features improve performance
- We find no evidence that ICL or large-scale multimodal pretraining can solve this task
- Future work includes
  - integrating even better features into the baseline
  - fine-tuning MLLMs using LoRA
  - including more keyframes in the visual input

# 4. Understanding Multimodal Models

# Beyond Benchmarking

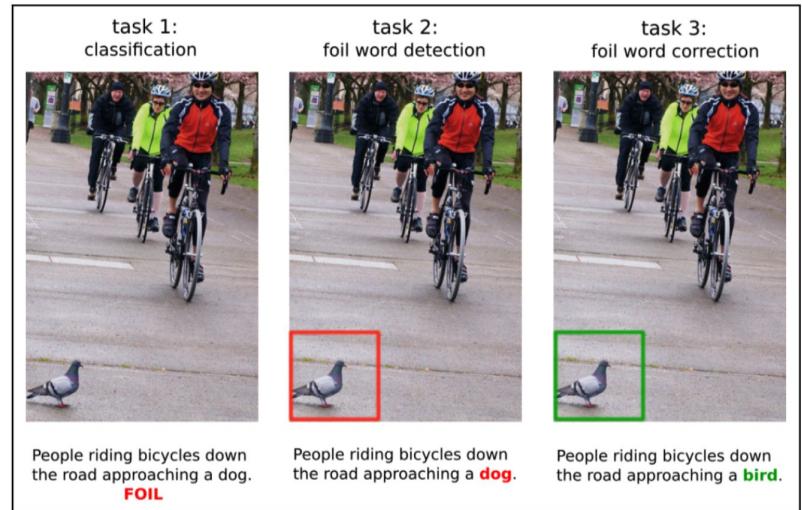
---

- Many questions about what drives the success of these models?
  - Better contextualization: make better use of the multimodal inputs
  - Acquire certain “skills”, e.g. counting or localization
  - Understand linguistic structures
  - Something else?
- Model-internal behaviour
  - Attention mechanism patterns
- Probing
  - Tasks related to different skills

# FOIL Captions

---

- Do V&L models really understand the relationship between words and images?
- Crowdsource datasets that contain contextually plausible but incorrect image–text pairs

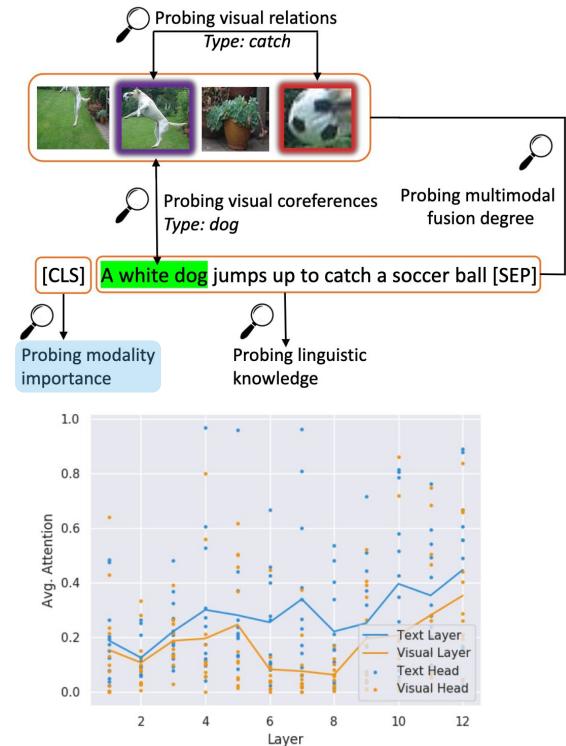


# Vision and Language Understanding Evaluation

- Suite of five model probing tasks
- **Modality Influence:** Estimate the layer-wise contribution of each modality to the [CLS] embedding:

$$I_{M,j} = \sum_{i \in S} \mathbb{1}(i \in M) \cdot \alpha_{ij}$$

- The UNITER model relies more on textual features when fusing modalities throughout the model



# VALSE Benchmark

---

- Test visio-linguistic capabilities with image-sentence foil pairs
- Image-sentence matching task
  - Existential quantifiers
  - Semantic number
  - Counting
  - Prepositional relations
  - Action replacement / swap
  - Co-reference



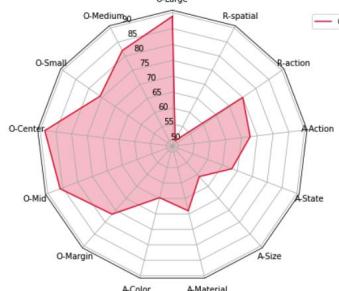
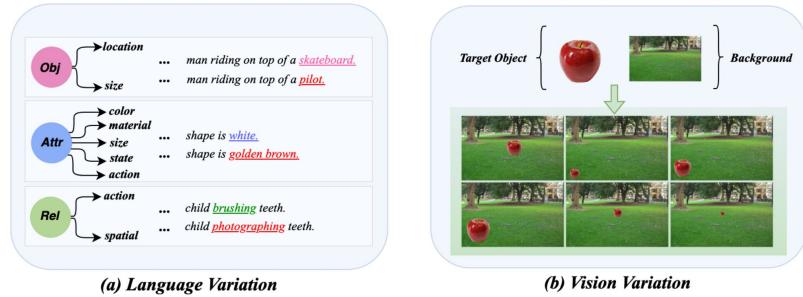
A small copper vase with **some flowers** / **exactly one flower** in it.

Metric	Model	Avg.
	Random	50.0
	GPT1*	60.7
	GPT2*	60.1
	CLIP	64.0
$acc_r$	LXMERT	59.6
	ViLBERT	63.7
	12-in-1	<b>75.1</b>
	VisualBERT	<u>46.4</u>

$$p(caption, img) > p(foil, img)$$

# VL-CheckList

- Evaluate V&L models based on automatic manipulations to vision and language data.
- Image-Sentence matching task
- Radar chart overviews based on object / attribute / relationship variations



# Subject-Verb-Object Probes

- Large-scale dataset with SVO triplets mined from Conceptual Captions and 14K images and with crowdsourced captions
- Foil detection formulation



# WinoGround

---

- 1,600 text-image pairs to evaluate compositional understanding



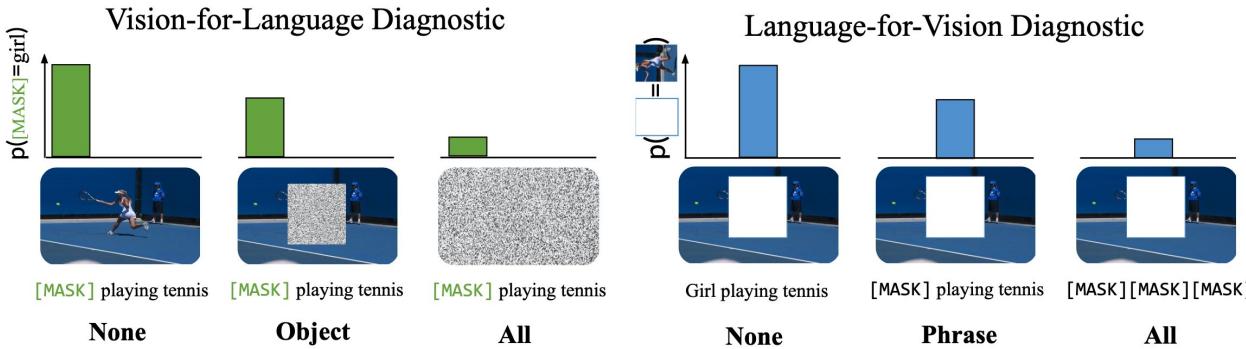
some plants  
surrounding a  
lightbulb



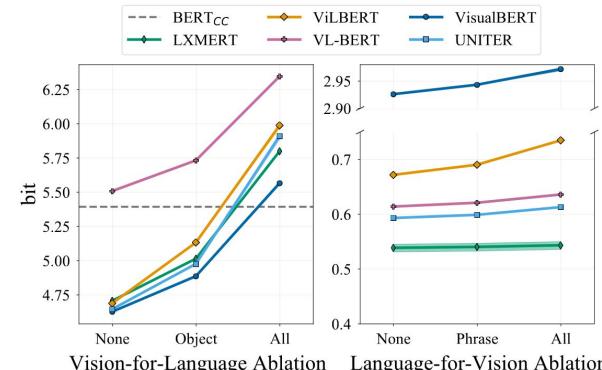
a lightbulb  
surrounding  
some plants

- Images sourced **with permission** from Getty.
- Differences are categorised into: swap dependent, swap-independent, and visual differences

# Vision-for-Language?



- Pair of diagnostic evaluations that can be applied to any model that makes MLM and MRC predictions.



# Summary

---

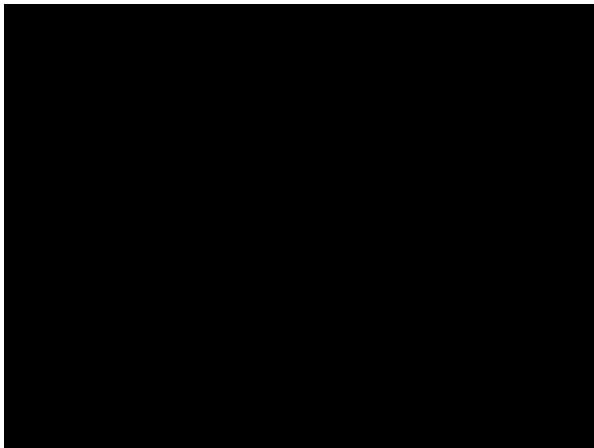
- Understanding and analysis is a vibrant area of research
- Foil detection is the most popular methodology
- Witnessing a methodological shift
  - attention analyses → linguistically-informed analyses
  - hand-crafted datasets
  - simpler accuracy-based metrics

## 5. Future Directions

# Physical Understanding

---

- Predicting and explaining physical actions in the world will become of increasing importance as we create embodied agents



Q: How many objects are prevented by the tiny green triangle from falling into the basket?

Q: What is the color of the last object that collided with the tiny red circle?

Q: If any of the other objects are removed, will the tiny green circle end up in the basket?

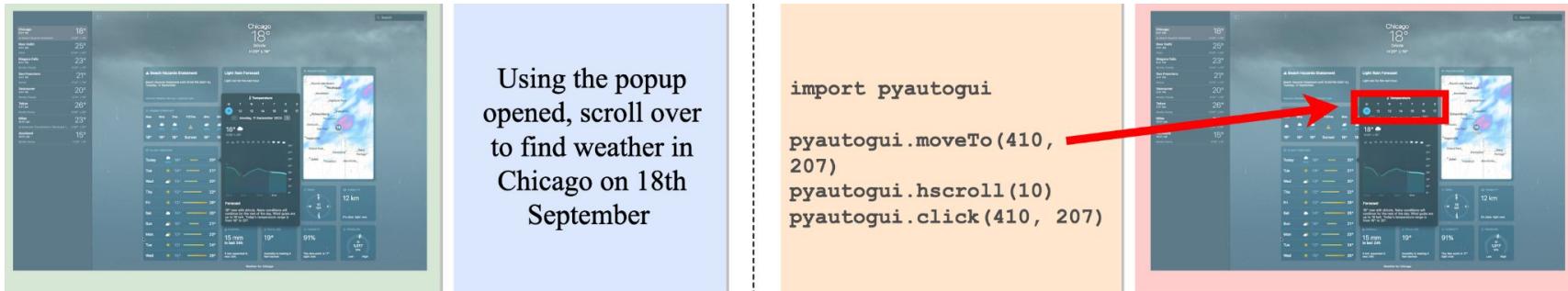
# Text-based Video Games

- Learning to act in procedurally-generated video game environments with rich contexts, action spaces, and long-term rewards



# Multimodal Interaction

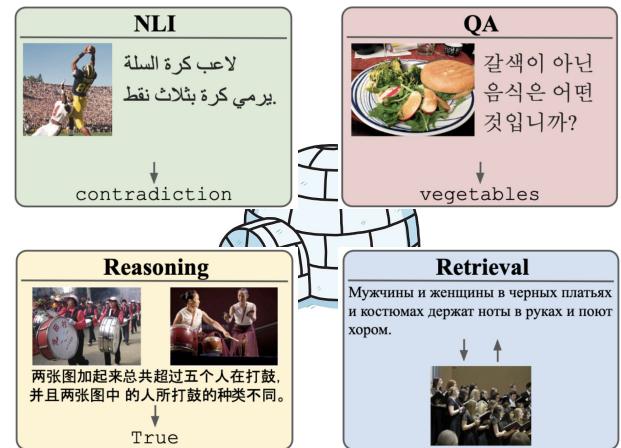
- OmniAct combines multimodal understand with program execution to solve a variety of tasks that humans perform with their computers



# Multilinguality

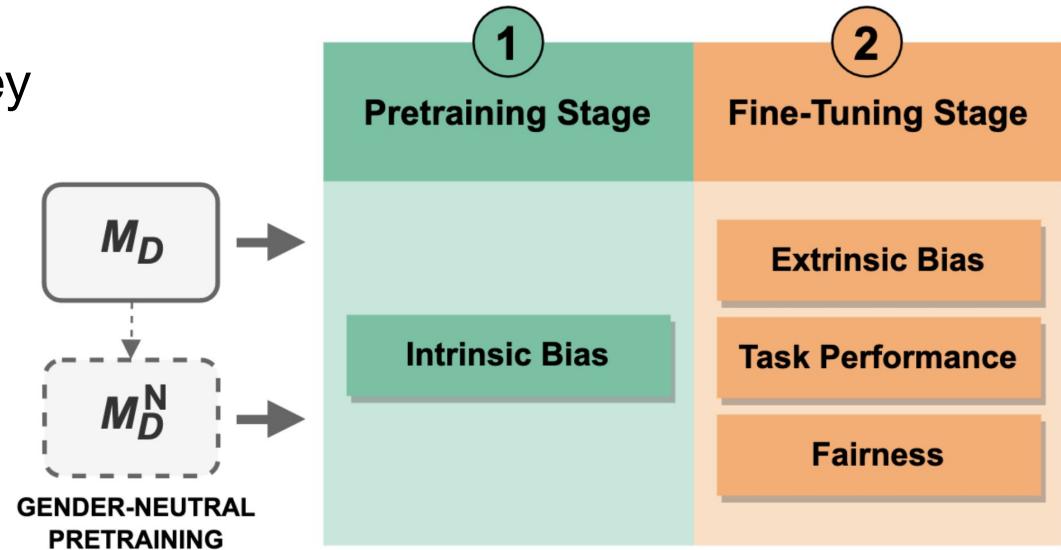
---

- The majority of Vision and Language research is in English
- We need resources, models, and evaluations to create useful multilingual multimodal models
- High-quality data requires:
  - time
  - money
  - community engagement



# Bias and Fairness

- What are the intrinsic biases learned during multimodal pretraining and how do they affect downstream task performance?



Next

# Fine-grained Multimodal Data ...

- Domain-specific fine-grained VQA data
  - Chinese food
  - Highly-detailed taxonomy
  - Human questions
  - Three version of the task
  - Private data



Next

# is challenging for LMMs

## Multi-Image VQA

哪一道菜属于川菜中的凉菜? Which is a cold dish in Sichuan cuisine?



## Single-Image VQA

以下菜品是哪个地区的特色菜?  
Which region is this food a specialty?

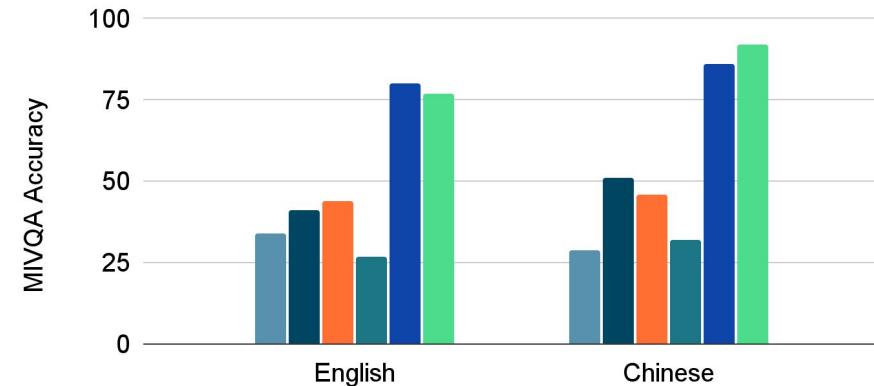


## Text QA

白切鸡的口味特色是? What is the flavor of 白切鸡?

- (A) 麻辣 (spicy)
- (B) 松软 (soft)
- (C) 外焦里嫩 (crispy-tender)
- (D) 咸 (salty)

■ Phi-3 ■ Idefics2 ■ Mantis ■ Qwen-VL ■ GPT-4o ■ Human



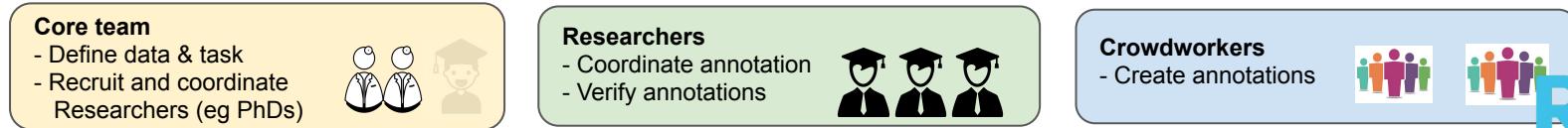
API-based model barely outperforms a naive English annotator

Huge gap to fill between API-based and open-weights models

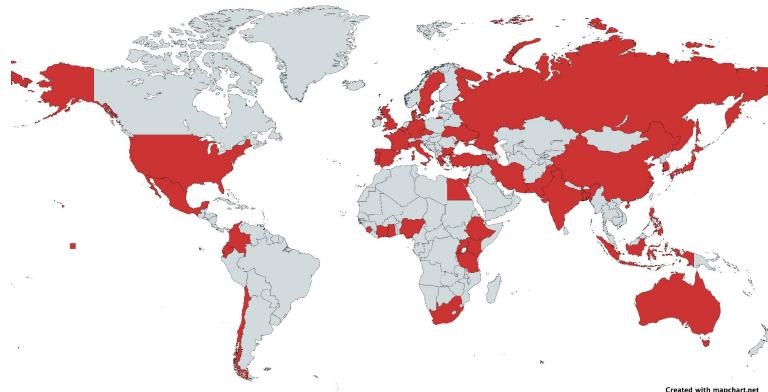
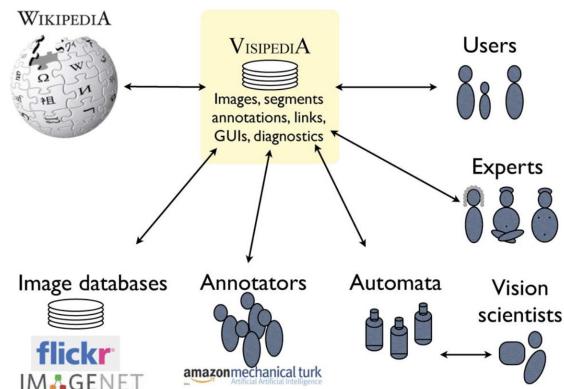
Next

# wonders: Community-driven Multimodal Data

- Large-scale data collection with crowdworkers: most budgets cannot scale



- Our bet: **People care about their culture**



R R

Next

# Gamified Data Collection

MLC Dyna Bench About Communities ▾ Search E

Category

Concept



Manden skærer en flæskesteg til aftensmad

En mand med en gris

Submit

Thumbs up / Thumbs down

**Q: What if we treated language as vision?**

# Language Modelling with Pixels

## ICLR 2023



P. Rust



J. F. Lotz



E. Bugliarello



E. Salesky



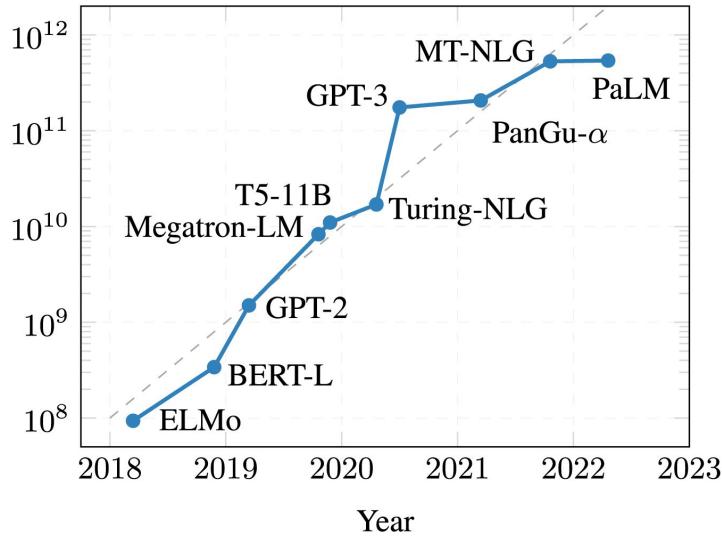
M. de Lhoneux



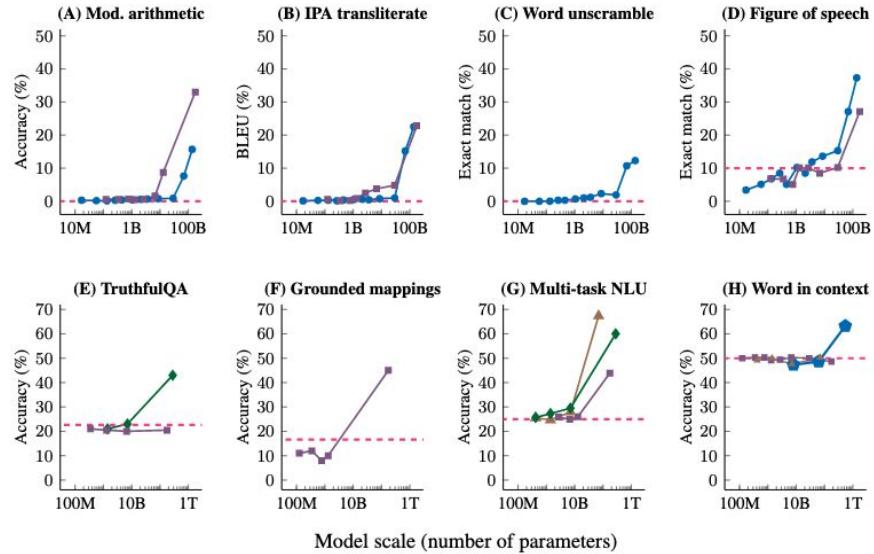
D. Elliott

# NLP in the Era of Scale

Model Size (# params.)

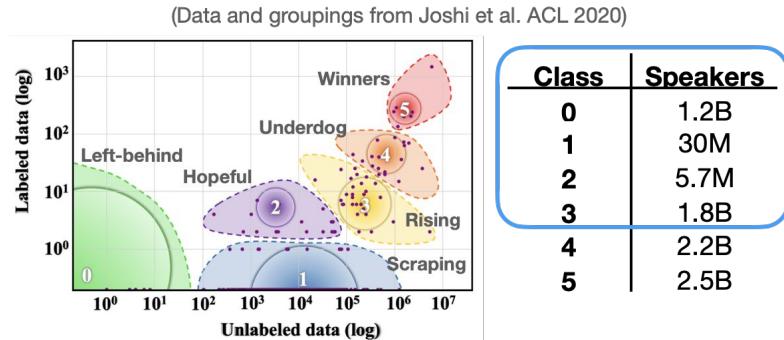


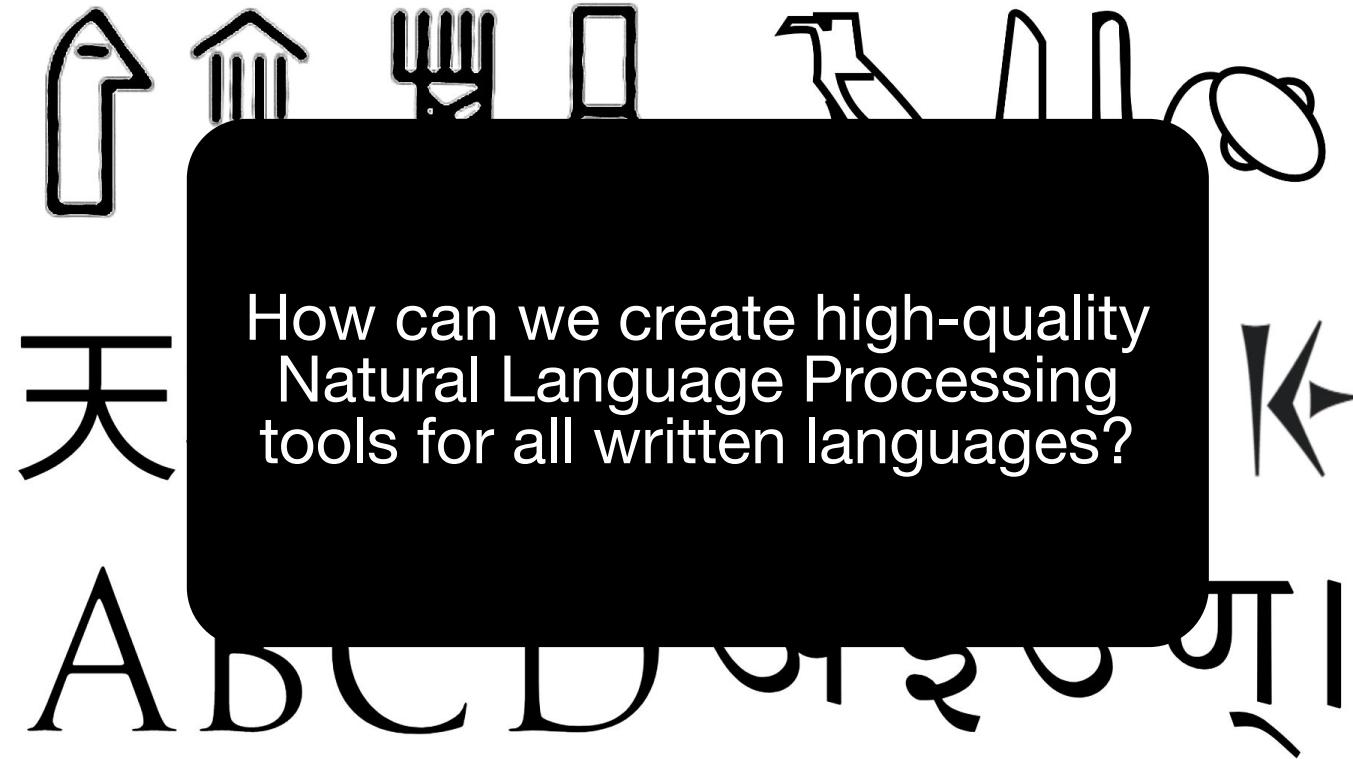
● LaMDA    ● GPT-3    ● Gopher    ● Chinchilla    ● PaLM    - - - Random



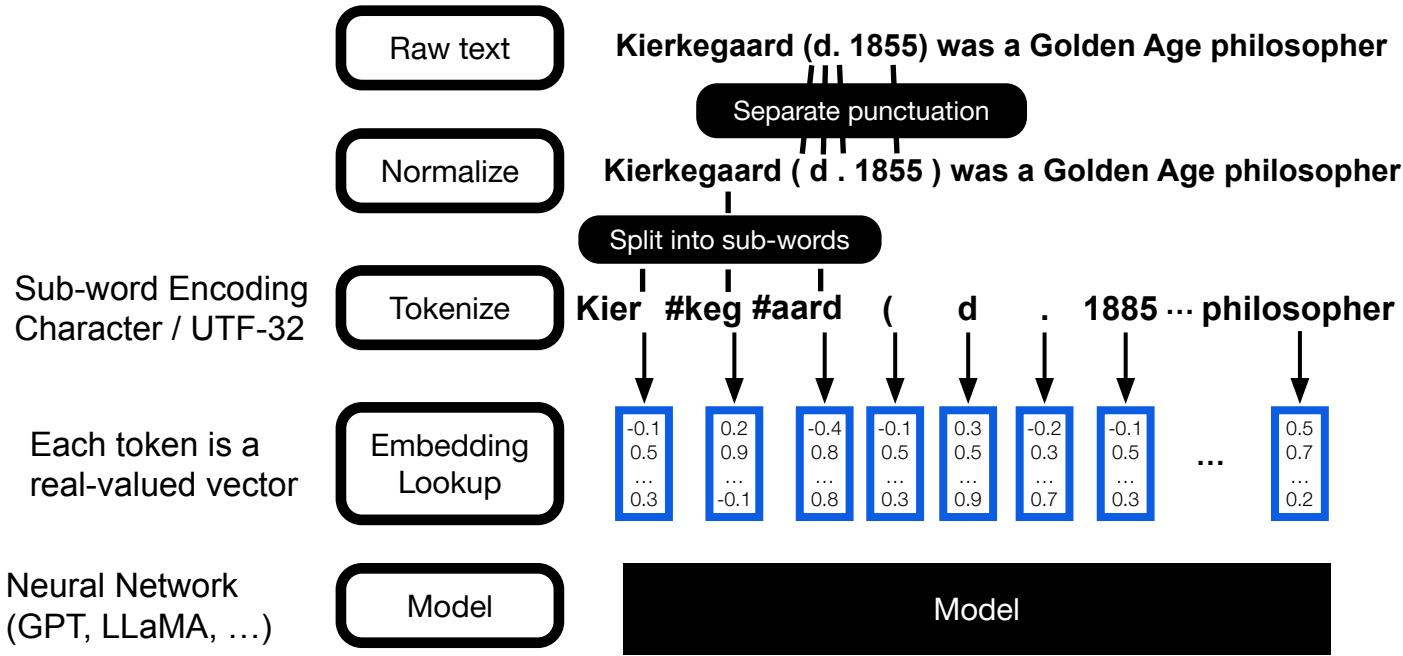
# NLP for All Written Languages

- There are 3,000 written languages
  - 400 with >1M speakers
- NLP usually covers 100 languages
  - Technological exclusion for billions
- We need systems for all languages, not just those that are high-resource

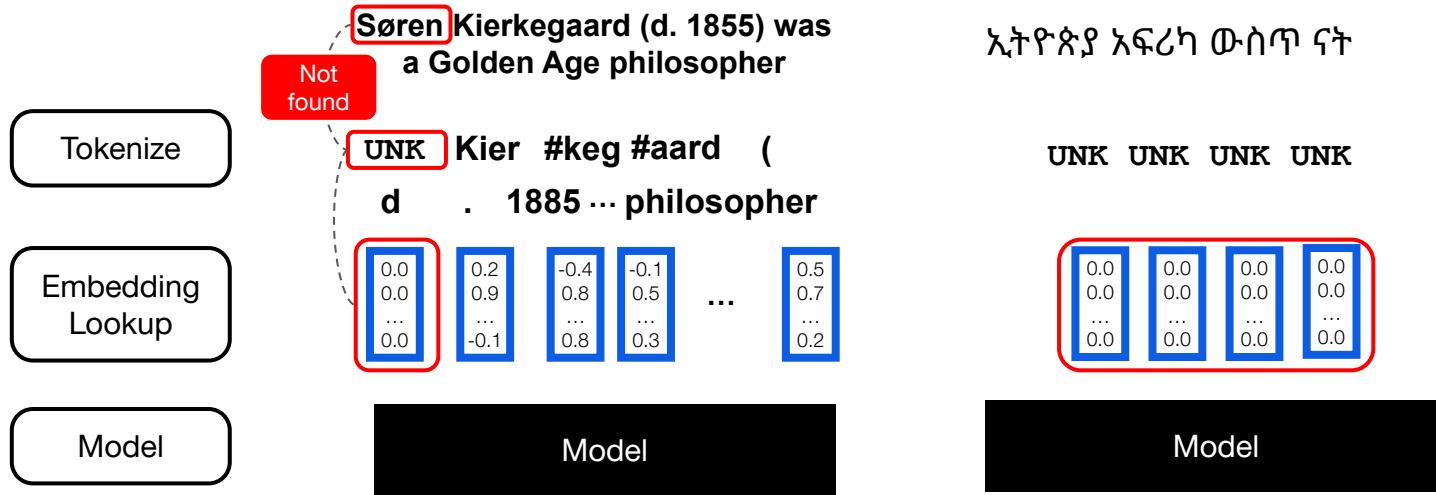




# NLP is a pipeline ...



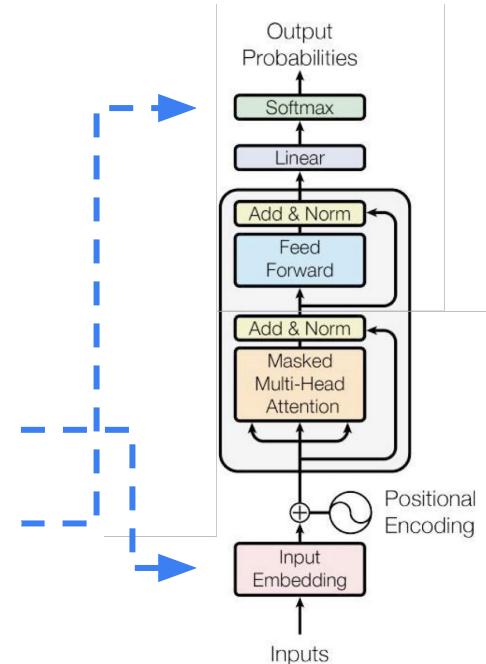
# ... that is easily broken



This issue disproportionately affects low-resource languages

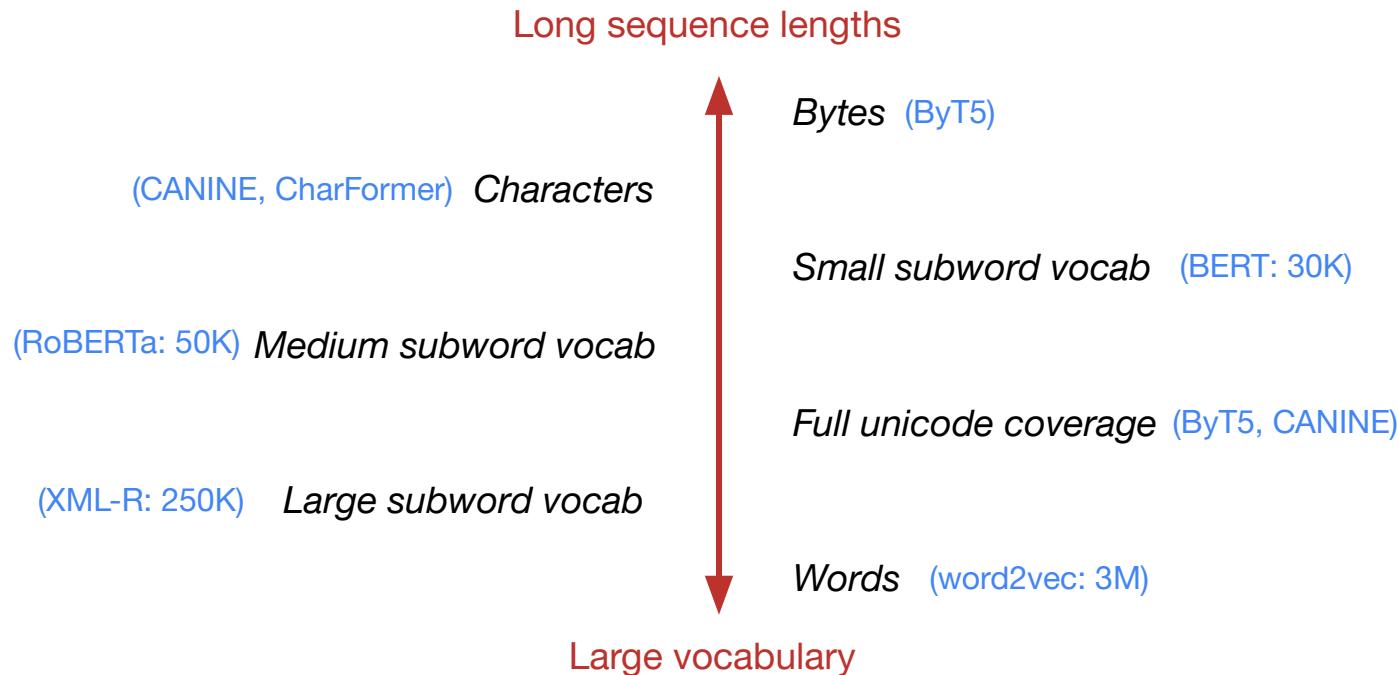
# The Vocabulary Bottleneck

- NLP is an **open vocabulary problem** and the ability of a model is determined by its vocabulary:
  1. tokens, characters, sub-words, etc.
- This creates a bottleneck in two places:
  1. *Representational bottleneck* in the Embedding layer
  2. *Computational bottleneck* in the Output layer

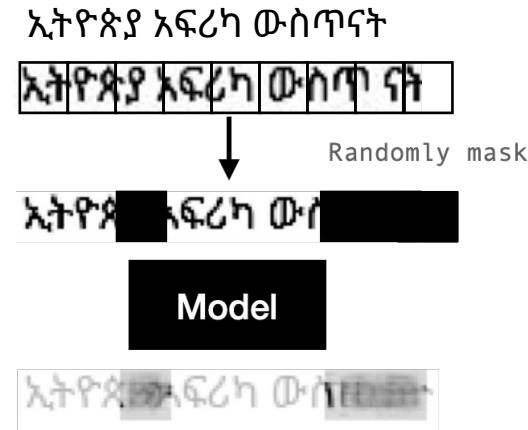
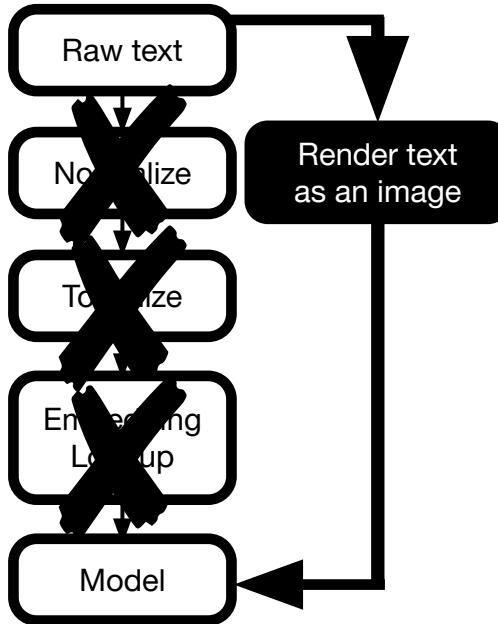


# Where's the sweet spot?

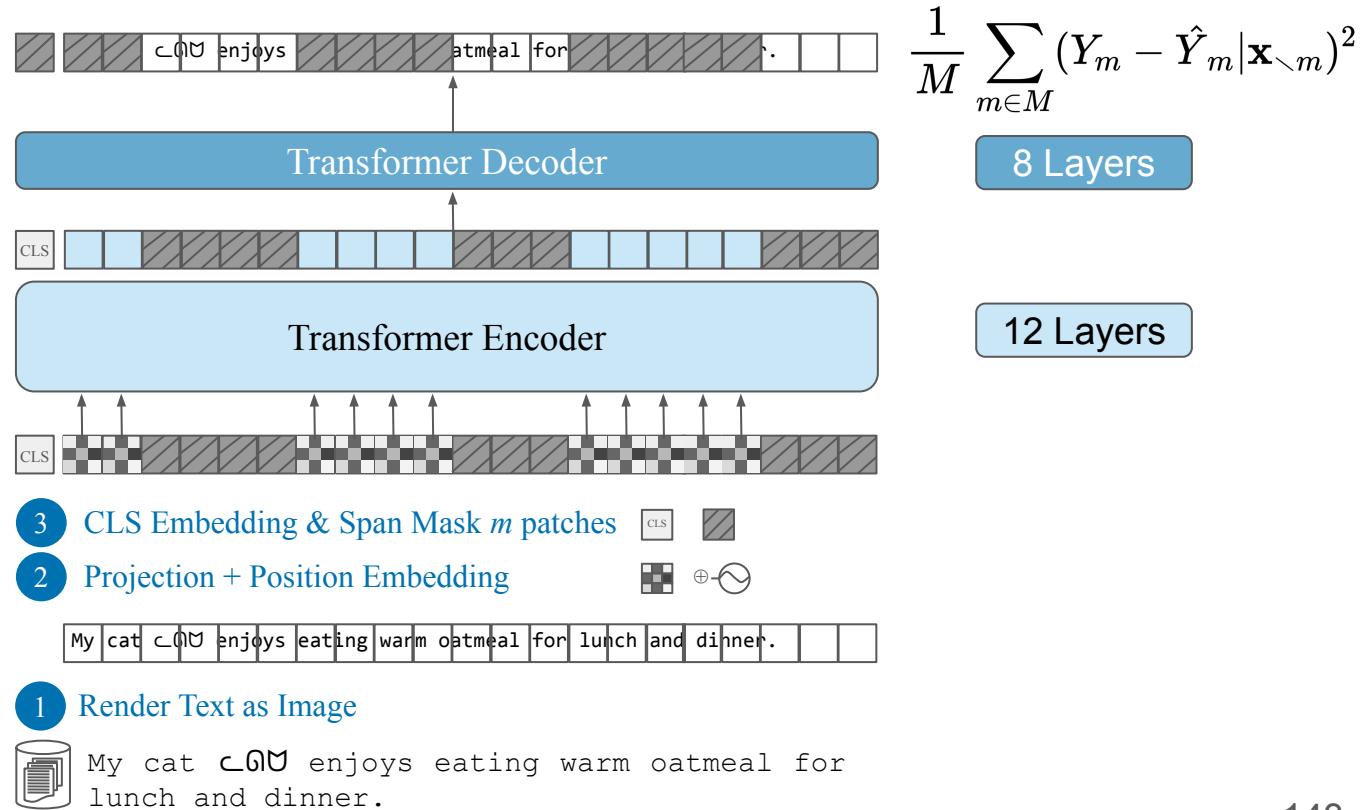
---



# Main idea: treat language as vision



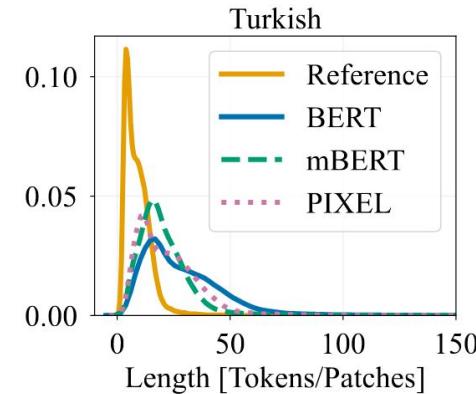
# The PIXEL Model



# Rendered Text is Compact

---

- PIXEL encoding produces sequence lengths that are at least as long as BERT.
  - Universal Dependencies datasets with human reference segmentations
  - No length penalty for any language, unlike some LLMs (Ahia et al. 2023)



Proportion of text that is encoded as  $k$  subwords / patches.

# Pretraining

---

- **English Dataset:** English Wikipedia and Books Corpus
- **Masking:** 25% Span Masking
- **Maximum sequence length:** 529 patches ( $16 \times 8464$  pixels)
- **Compute:** 8 x 40GB A100 GPUs for 8 days
- **Parameters:** 86M encoder + 26M decoder

There is only 0.05% non-English text in our pretraining data (estimated by Blevins and Zettlemoyer 2022)

The **Great Wall of China** (traditional Chinese: 萬里長城; simplified Chinese: 万里长城; pinyin: Wàn lǐ Chángchéng)

# A new type of generative model

Penguins are designed to be streamlined and hydrodynamic, so having long legs would add expanding. Having short legs with webbed feet to act like runners, helps to give them that the do-like figure. If we compare bird anatomy with humans, we would see something peculiar. By taking a look at the side-by-side image in Figure 1, you can see how their leg bones are close to ours. What most people mistake for knees are actually the ankles of birds. This gives the illusion that bird knees bend opposite of ours. The knees are actually tucked up inside the bones of the bird! So how does this look inside of a penguin? In the images below, you can see boxes surrounding the penguins' knees.



100K steps

500K steps

1M steps

# Downstream Tasks

---

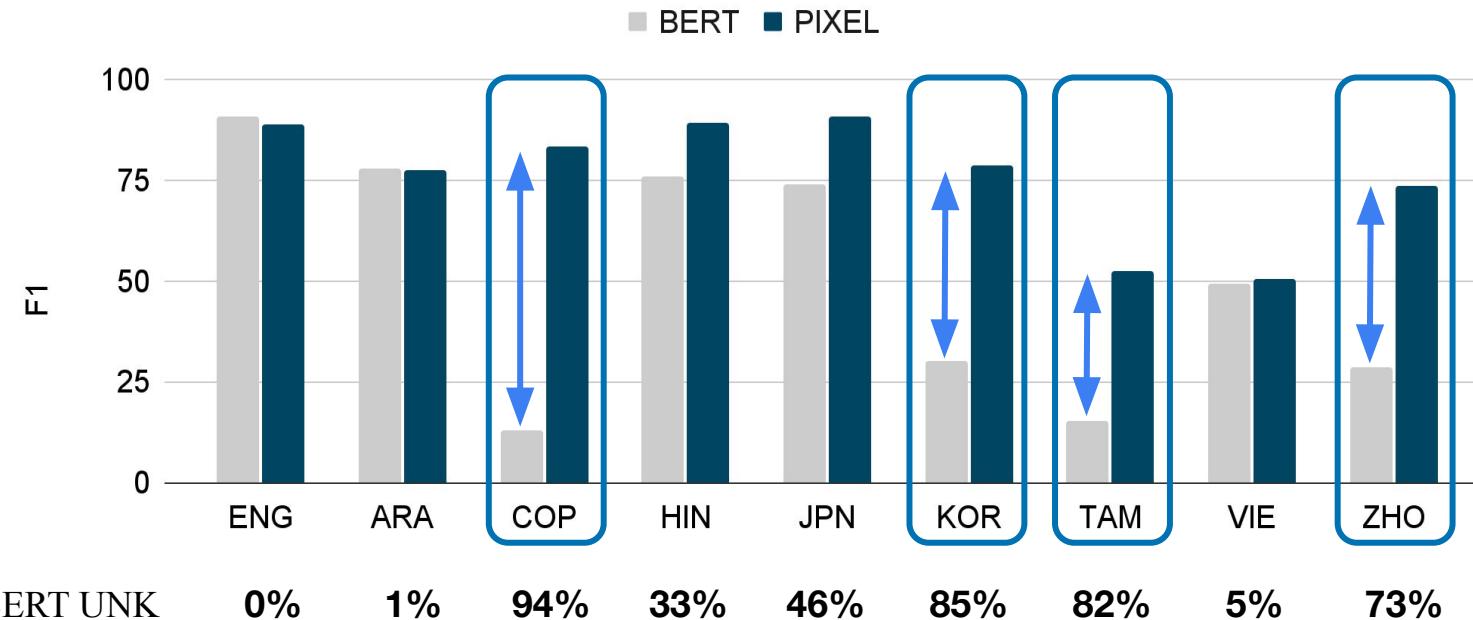
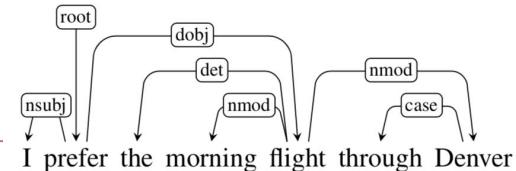
- **Datasets:** Universal Dependencies, MasakhaNER, GLUE, Zeroé
- **Models:**

	Parameters	Pretraining Data
PIXEL <sub>BASE</sub>	86M	English Wikipedia + Bookcorpus
BERT <sub>BASE</sub>	110M	—
CANINE-C	127M	104-languages from Wikipedia

Similar pretraining setup

Tries to solve the same  
problem using UTF-32

# Dependency Parsing Results

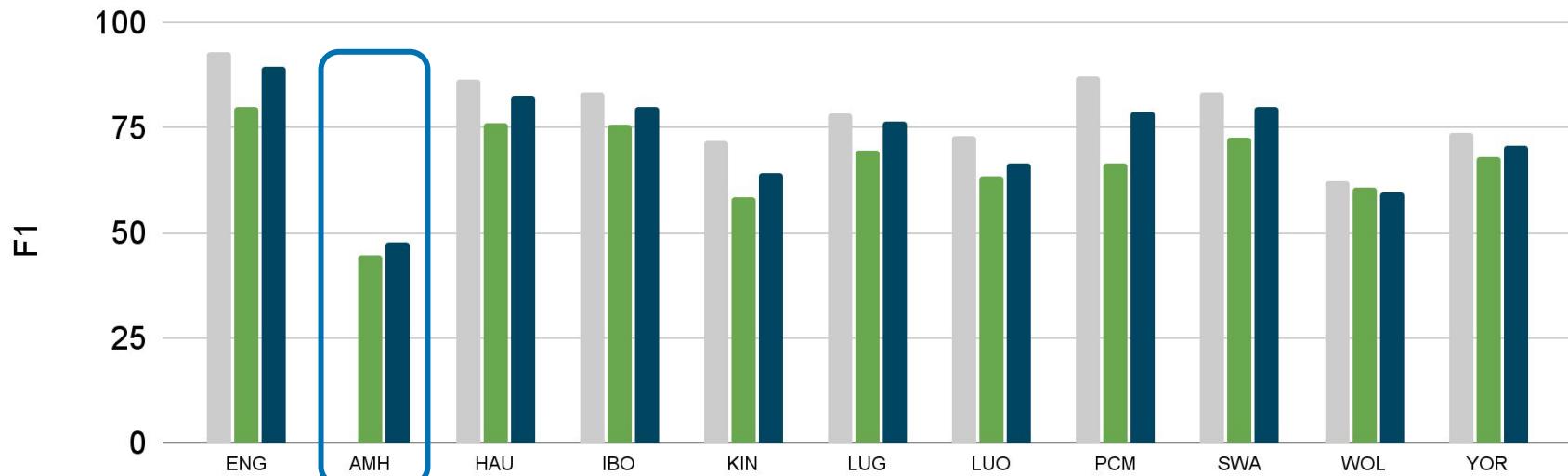


PIXEL vastly outperforms BERT on unseen scripts

# Named Entity Recognition

Emir of Kano turban Zhang wey don spend 18 years for Nigeria

BERT CANINE PIXEL

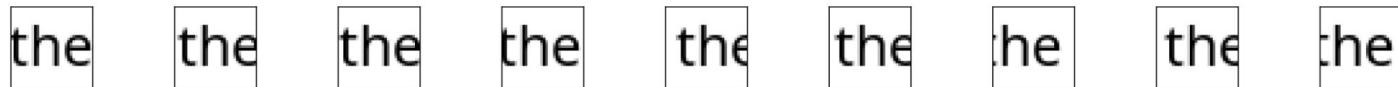


PIXEL outperforms BERT  
on the non-Latin script

PIXEL outperforms the  
multilingually pretrained CANINE-C

# Text Rendering Matters

- The original text renderer produces many nearly-identical patches
  - This is representation- and compute-wasteful



(a) Continuous rendering (CONTINUOUS):

I must be growing small again. ■

(b) Structured rendering (BIGRAMS):

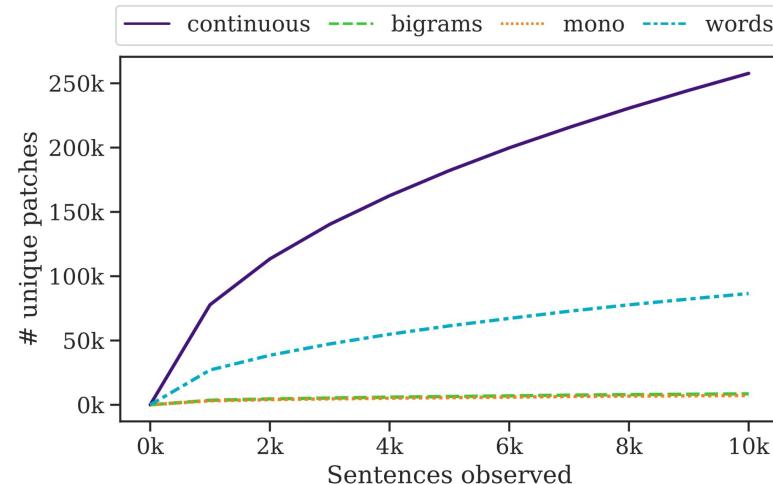
I must be gr ow in g sm al l ag ai n. ■

(c) Structured rendering (MONO):

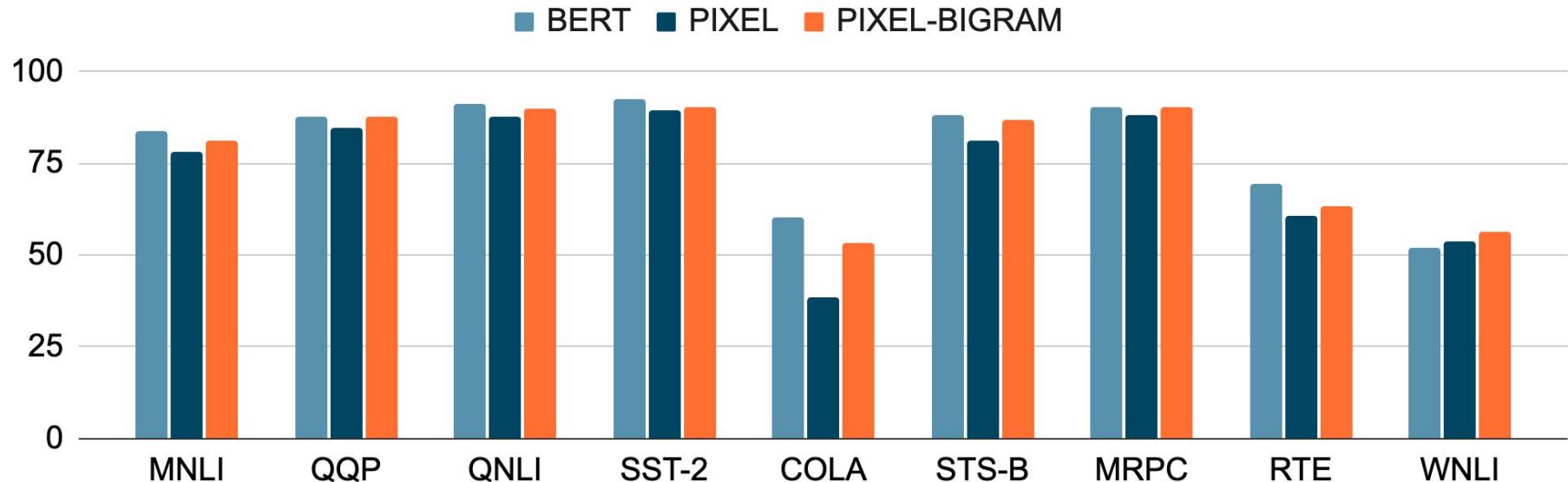
I mu st b e gr owing sm all ag ai n. ■

(d) Structured rendering (WORDS):

I mu st b e gr owing sm all ag ai n. ■



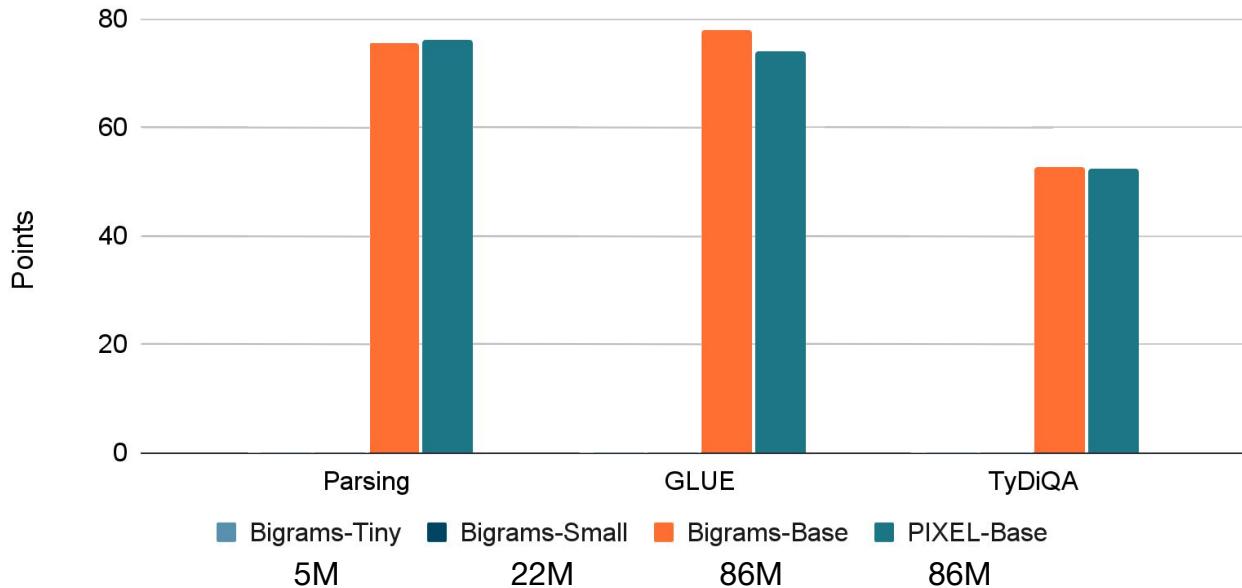
# Sentence-level Tasks: GLUE



Bigram text rendering produces better models

# Scaling Down ↓

- Better text rendering can create effective models at smaller scales



# Application: Historical Document Processing

---

- Worldwide efforts to digitize historic documents (Groesen 2015)
- Typical pipeline for enabling access is:
  - a. Scan documents into high-quality digital formats
  - b. Perform OCR on those documents (one-off process)
  - c. Search through documents using OCR annotations

What if we could do this without OCR?

# Caribbean Newspapers, 1718–1876

- Collaboration with researchers that are interested in tracking newspapers notices about escaped slaves
  - What was the given name?
  - What reward was offered?
  - Who was the contact person?
- Dataset of 1.65M scanned pages



# PIXEL for Historical Documents

- Historical document-aware Pretraining
  - Mixture of scanned newspapers and synthetic newspaper-like text generated from Wikipedia and Bookcorpus datasets
  - All input data is scaled to 368x368 and split into 16x16 patches

sionally blogs such as Arcade, a humanities site published by Stanford University. From 2012 to 2016, he hosted a radio show webcast by Alanna Heiss's Clocktower Productions. In autumn 2020, an article he wrote for The Creative Independent was widely disseminated on the internet. Called 19 things I'd tell people contemplating starting a record label (after running one for 19 years) it was a mix of advice, warnings, and personal history gleaned from almost two decades of operating Brassland. It was followed by an appearance on the Third Story podcast.

Sickman's war service took him to Tokyo during the occupation of Japan where he served as one of the "Monuments Men" under General Douglas MacArthur's

terminated by the All England Club in 1981 in order for The Championships, Wimbledon to be held. Since then the club has been nomadic, moving to Osterley and Greenford before settling in Acton and playing their matches at Wasps FC's Twyford Avenue Sports Ground. By 2012, the club had downsized to running only one team.

A number of players for the New Zealand national rugby union team have played for London New Zealand including Doug Rollerton, Terry Morrison and Paul Sapsford. In recognition of their history, the club have been granted privileges from both the Rugby Football Union and the New Zealand Rugby. They are the only rugby team aside of New Zealand national representative teams that wears the silver fern as their crest and the RFU exempted them from the overseas player quotas, prior to their abolition. The club have also taken part in a number of New Zealand government

aving been estranged from her father's family for most of her life, Andrea is intrigued. But what exactly is the Bancroft's involvement with "Genesis," a mysterious person working to destabilize the geopolitical balance at the risk of millions of lives? In a series of devastating coincidences, Andrea and Belknap come together and must form an uneasy alliance if they are to uncover the truth behind "Genesis"—before it is too late.

Girls' BMX was part of the cycling at the 2010 Summer Youth Olympics program. The event consisted of a seeding round, then elimination rounds where after three races the top 4

swimmers have so far achieved qualifying standards in the following events (up to a maximum of 2 swimmers in each event at the Olympic Qualifying Time (OQT), and potentially 1 at the Olympic Selection Time (OST)):

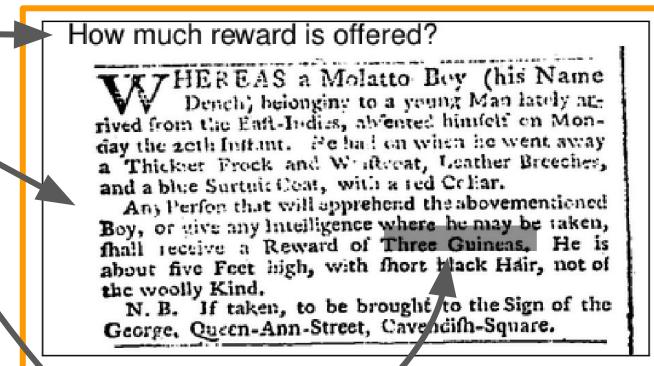
Venezuela has entered one athlete into the table tennis competition at the Games. Gremlins Arvelo secured the Olympic spot in the women's singles by virtue of her top six finish at the 2016 Latin American Qualification Tournament in Santiago, Chile.

# Visual Question Answering in Newspapers

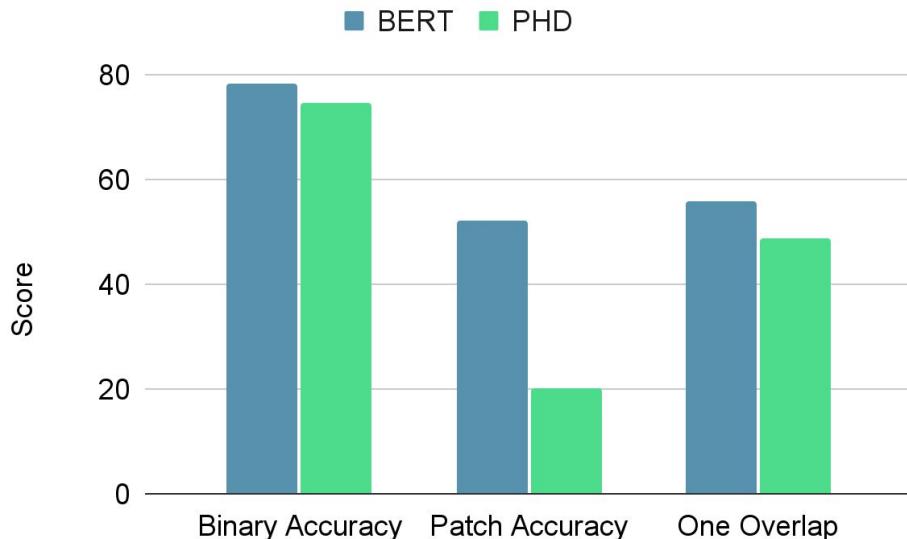
- Frame this as a Visual Question Answering Task

- Render the question
- Render the clipping on a canvas
- Annotate context of answer

- Train the model to predict the label of the answer



# Results



What other rewards were offered?

RUN AWAY,  
From the Ship BRITANNIA, Capt. Scott,  
Commander, on Friday the 25th Instant,  
**T**WO Negro Men, the one named  
LEWIS, near Six Feet high, and two  
Holes in his Ears; the other about Five Feer  
Six Inches high, he has two or three Particular  
Sears between his Eyebrows, and his Teeth are  
filed down like a Saw between every Tooth. If  
any Body will bring them to Mess. MUER and  
CLANDEK, Merchants, in Nicholas Lane,  
shall be handomely rewarded.

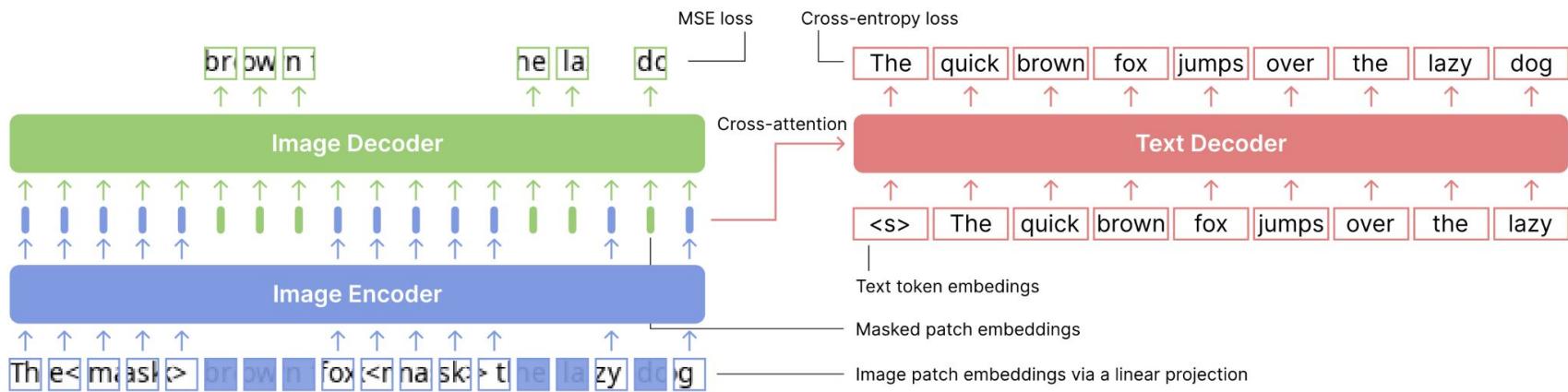
Who is the contact person for the ad?

Aft week run away from his Master **J. Bromley, Esq;**  
of Bookham in Surrey, his Negro Man **Henry,** alias  
**Harry Johnson,** aged about 35 Years, tall of stature, sometimes  
wears a Perriwig, speaks English well, in a blue  
Livery with pearl Buttons, and has taken with him sev-  
eral of his Masters Goods. Whoever secures **him**, and  
gives notice to his Master aforesaid, or to **Mr. Richard**  
**Sheppard** in **Lothbury, London,** shall have a Guinea Re-  
ward.

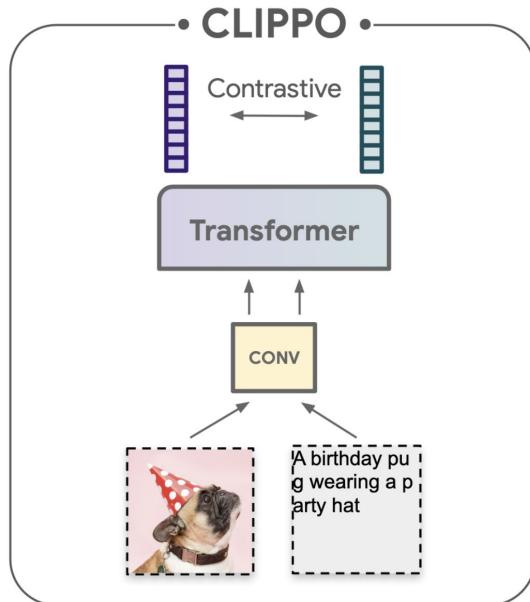
Surprisingly good performance compared to a model  
trained on manually transcribed text

# Patch and Text Prediction

- Combine patch and token prediction



# Joint Multimodal Reasoning



# Open Questions

---

- Interpretability:
  - Does this work based on orthographic similarity or is it learning grammatical representations of text from pixels?
- Multilinguality and scale:
  - How should we train a multilingual PIXEL encoder?
    - Language-based or script-based data selection

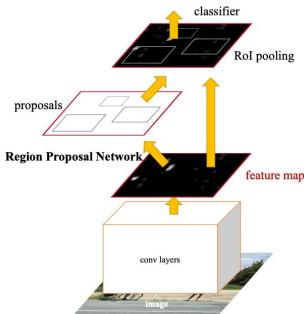
# Wrap-up

# 1. Datasets

some sheep walking in the middle of a road  
a herd of sheep with green markings walking down the road  
a herd of sheep walking down a street next to a lush green grass covered hillside.  
sheared sheep on roadway taken from vehicle, with green hillside in background.  
a flock of freshly sheered sheep in the road.



# 2. Representation

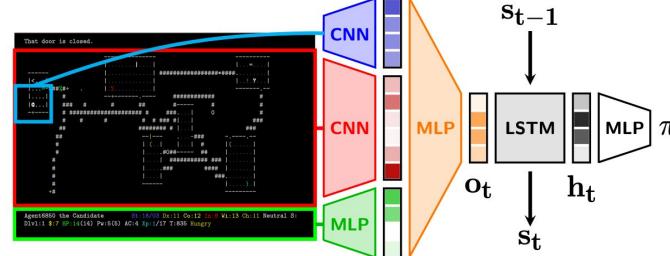
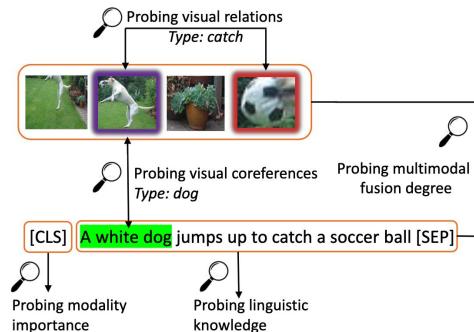


# 3. Modelling

Language Model

Embed

The red horse



# 4. Understanding

# 5. New Directions